



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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April 2023 Newsletter

Issue 8

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May, 2023 Deadline:

April 15, 2023

Stay informed!

Branch website: aauw-whc.org

National website: aauw.org

AAUW WEST HARRIS COUNTY BRANCH

Saturday, April 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive *and Zoom*

Spring Pot Luck Brunch and Social!

For our April meeting we will celebrate our AAUW Community with a Spring Pot Luck brunch and social. We ask members to bring a brunch dish to share for the meeting. In addition, we ask for those members who are comfortable doing so to share a 2-minute story about themselves (first person only please) with the theme "College Memories!" (We will have a timer!) Our members are made up of very talented and gifted women and we know you have had your share of fascinating experiences from your college days that you might like to tell us about.

Our Zoomers are encouraged to participate in the story-telling but it may be hard to share the good food!



Lillian Care
Program Vice-President



Hold That Date!

Sunday, May 7, 2023 – 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Annual Style Show Fundraiser at Talbot's in Town and Country
A great opportunity to support AAUW and update your wardrobe.



Dear West Harris County Members,

Spring is in full bloom in Houston, and it is a great time to be outside. Enjoy the spring weather by joining one of our outdoor activities this April: Garden Divas, Hiking Honeys, Byway Birders, or the Cultural Activities. Everyone is welcome to these activities and any branch activities listed in the newsletter.



Congratulations to our newly elected officers and thank you for sharing your time and expertise with us. It takes numerous people, besides our board, to keep our branch vibrant and relevant. Please consider accepting a non-elected position or committee position when asked. Even better, volunteer before being asked.

Poupette Farnell, President-Elect

Membership



April may bring showers, but it also brings new members, who join in April, the opportunity to have paid dues through March 2024. National has set 2023-2024 dues as \$72.00, State dues are \$13.00, and Branch dues are \$11.00. Present members will renew membership in July at \$96.00.

The remaining months of this year's calendar offer great opportunities for new members to get involved. May is the Talbots Style Show and June is the Spring Luncheon where we introduce our Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund winners. Pass the word, AAUW- West Harris County is open to new members!

Carolyn Stoffel, Membership Vice-President

Election Of Branch Officers

Congratulations to the new West Harris Branch officers who were elected at the March 18, 2023 branch meeting.

President-elect: Josephine Glidewell

Program Vice-President: Lilian Care

Financial Officer: Diana Tiberia

Assistant Vice President of AAUW Funds: Helen Santire

Corresponding Secretary: Rebecca French

These new officers will be installed at the branch meeting in June.

A sincere thank you to each of them for their willingness to share their time and talents with the WHC Branch.



Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship

Friday February 24th, we had a celebratory luncheon for AAUW WHC members. The purpose of the event was to acknowledge and honor the persons who set up the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund (formerly Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund): Arlene Baker, Carol Telfer (deceased), Marietta Hostak, Mary Dodson, Dana Cutts, Diana Guarniere, Patricia Dach, Gwen Robberson (deceased), Eric Anderson (deceased), Susan Thompson, and Pat and Leon Thomsen. We appreciate their dedication to the college education of young women from Houston ISD, Alief ISD, and Spring Branch ISD. This celebration was totally underwritten by: Friends of AAUW Funds and Friends of Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund.

The luncheon took place at SBISD's Altharetta Yeargin Art Museum, 901 Yorkchester Dr. There were 43 people present. Each table was elegantly set with china provided by each table host and the stemware used for drinks was donated by Susan Dutton. We had a wonderful fresh salad with grilled chicken and a delicious cookie prepared by Belong Kitchen who employs adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their Grab and Go Kitchen is located at 9655 Katy Freeway, Village Towers Plaza, Suite 3105. If you find yourself in the area or tend to like buying prepared meals, you might want to support this business. They post the weekly menu online. (<https://www.belongkitchenhtx.org>)



BELONG
Kitchen



Mary Dodson, Dana Cutts, Diana Guarniere, Marietta Hostak, Pat Dach and Susan Thompson
Arlene Baker was not able to attend.

Carolyn Morris gave a thorough description of the history of the scholarship as well as a financial report and Sharon Jorgensen outlined the scholarship application and selection process and answered questions. Thanks to Dallas Morris and Gene Stoffel for providing parking attendant services. And a huge thank you to Carolyn Morris for planning and organizing the luncheon! After lunch we enjoyed looking through the various art exhibits.

membership supports this scholarship. Donors will receive a letter that states that their donation is tax deductible. The person you are honoring (or the person handling the estate of your deceased honoree) will also receive notice of your gift. Checks should be made out to Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund and given or mailed to Carolyn Morris, 11159 Riverview Way, Houston, TX 77042. We also accept electronic payments using Zelle. Zelle is available through most major bank apps under transfers and incurs no additional fees to the donor or the scholarship fund. To use Zelle, enter the following email address (using the exact spelling and spacing):

thomsenbakertelferscholarship@gmail.com

You may enter Carolyn Morris as the name and there is an opportunity for you to type the name and reason for your donation.

April 14th is the deadline for our scholarship application. If you want to share the link with applicants, use:

<https://westharriscounty-tx.aauw.net/about/scholarships/>

The Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Board appreciates your support!

The Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Board

Will the Pink tax go away this Texas legislative session?

“Pink tax”, “tampon tax”, or “period tax” refer to the state sales taxes on feminine hygiene products like tampons, pads, liners, and other products essential to menstrual health. According to USA Facts twenty one states currently tax these products. Since 2016, 24 states have exempted menstrual products from state sales tax, while five states have no sales tax at all. Texas is among the states where consumers still pay tax on these products. Lawmakers are reluctant to make exceptions regardless of how expensive these products have become, probably because of how large a revenue driver it is for states. The Texas Comptroller estimates that sales tax on feminine hygiene products generates \$28.6 million annually.



Feminine hygiene products are classified as a luxury item as though they were optional, not essential.

Why will removing this tax help? “Period poverty is a common yet hidden and stigmatized public health issue in the United States and globally,” according to Jhumka Gupta, an associate professor at George Mason University in a 2021 study. “It can reduce women's participation in school and the workplace.”

According to the American Medical Women’s Association, “period poverty refers to the inadequate access to menstrual hygiene tools and education, including but not limited to sanitary products, washing facilities, and waste management.” Twenty Five million women live below the poverty line in the U.S. The cost for these essentials can be overwhelming. Some families have to choose between buying menstrual products and putting food on the table. If appropriate resources are not available, girls and women may miss school or work which can cause lower self-esteem and decrease earnings.

A number of bills have been filed that eliminate the tax on feminine hygiene products as well as essential baby items, adult diapers, and more. Senator Joan Huffman has made the effort one of her priorities. There are also companion bills filed in the house so both legislative bodies will be considering similar bills and make the effort more likely to become a law.

Here are the bills to support. Let your Texas legislators know you want them to vote affirmatively on these bills.

1) SB 379 Relating to sales and use tax exemptions for wound care dressings and certain feminine hygiene products. By Senators Huffman, Alvarado, Campbell, Eckhardt, Kolkhorst, LaMantia, Paxton, and Zaffirini

Companion bill: HB 1265 by Rep Button, Identical

2) SB 128 Relating to a sales and use tax exemption for certain feminine hygiene products By Sen Springer

Companion bills: HB 70 by Rep Howard, Very Similar; HB 510 by Rep Wu, Identical; HB 2320 by Rep C. Harris. Very Similar

3) HB 300 by Rep. D. Howard, which would exempt feminine hygiene products, diapers, baby wipes, baby bottles, maternity clothes and breast milk pumps from state sales and use taxes, has been voted out of committee and is waiting to be set for consideration on the House floor.

Georgia Kimmel
Public Policy Chair

Funds - Looking Back, Looking Forward

The results are in for our Home Alone Fall Ball non-event, and you've done it again!

Nearly 40 WHC members participated by donating, with an average donation of about \$100! Almost everyone granted National's wish and earmarked their donation for Greatest Needs, with NCCWSL as the second most popular choice. "NickWhistle" is our catchy nickname for the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders.



Supporters also did an excellent job of navigating National's new website and using their credit card to donate directly through aauw.org. No doubt, Susan Boone's helpful step-by-step instructions, with pictures, near the bottom of westharriscounty-tx.aauw.net/funds/ made a difference. Everyone's efforts put us well within reach of our annual fundraising goal. Thank you!



Next, we're looking forward to our spring fundraiser – WHC's always well-attended Talbots Style Show! See the cover page for some exciting changes to this annual branch favorite.

Funds - Revisiting the National Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF)

At the exquisitely planned Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund Luncheon in February, an intriguing question came up from the audience: "Whatever happened to the Legal Advocacy Fund?" Many of us remember a time when National set each branch's fundraising goals for the year. National also gave each branch a separate, per-capita fundraising goal for the Legal Advocacy Fund, or LAF. The web page at www.aauw.org/resources/legal/laf/ explains the powerful reach that LAF still has:

Unfair pay, pregnancy discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and violations of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 can affect both women and men. AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund addresses these barriers by informing people of their rights and how to use the legal system to seek justice and change. LAF was created in 1981 by AAUW members and has provided millions of dollars to balance the scales of justice for people working toward gender equity through the legal system.



We support brave plaintiffs seeking legal redress for equal pay, Title IX, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and tenure denial violations. We allocate \$100,000 annually to help fund landmark cases, such as Wal-Mart v. Dukes and Cioca v. Rumsfeld, as well as cases with the potential to set future precedents like Rizo v. Fresno County Office of Education.

Did LAF merge into the Greatest Needs Fund, as someone at the luncheon suggested? The short answer is no.

As it turns out, LAF is still alive and well and "well-funded into the future," to quote Angie Cooper, a senior manager at AAUW headquarters in Washington, D.C. Angie adds that today our decision makers in Washington have prioritized the Greatest Needs Fund. (This is why when you donate through aauw.org Greatest Needs appears first on the list of choices and LAF does not even appear on the list.)

Debbie Campbell, Diane Statham, AAUW Funds Vice Presidents

APRIL 2023 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

To all Activity Leaders and Members: Please send several photos of your outings to show everyone your interests and passions from the past year for the "End of Year" newsletter. aauiwhcnews@gmail.com

Hiking Honeys

On **April 20**, the Hiking Honeys will return, after a long absence, to Stephen F. Austin State Park. Sara Dalton will lead the hike and will select one or a combination of trails for our enjoyment. All the trails in the park are rated easy. Depending on our chosen route, we may meander along the historic and current path of the Brazos River, stroll in a shaded cottonwood forest, or experience the nature of a pristine bottomlands forest. Information on lunch plans will follow in a later email.



We will carpool from the Barryknoll Street lot across from Memorial City Mall leaving at **9:00 a.m.** For those wishing to drive directly to the park, the address is 38 Park Road, San Felipe, TX 77473 (979-885-3613.) Plan to arrive there at **9:45 a.m.** 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. Additional information will follow later by email.

Please contact Sara Dalton at 713-855-0052 or dalton.sara@comcast.net if you plan to attend. Let her know at which location you plan to meet us.

Byway Birders



Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge and High Island **Saturday, April 22**, Byway birders will be looking for spring migrants beginning at Anahuac and continuing to High Island. Mid-day, we will break for lunch at the Stingaree and possibly check out Bolivar Flats for shorebirds.

The group will carpool from the Barryknoll Street lot across from Memorial City Mall leaving at **8:00 a.m.** For those wishing to drive directly to the main portion of the refuge, it is located on FM 1985 south of I10. Take exit 812 toward SH 61, turn right and continue to FM 562, which leads you to FM 1985. The entrance road will be on your right. (Please note this is not the refuge headquarters main office located south of I10 at exit 810.) Please plan to arrive at Anahuac Visitor Center parking area by **9:30 a.m.**

Bill and Edie OBrien are leading this trip. Please let Edie know if you plan on joining them. You may email her at edie.obrien@yahoo.com or call 281-467-9047.

Gourmet Groups – Classic and Nouveau Combined

The Gourmet group does not meet in April. Our next dinner will be in May. Please check the May newsletter for details and contact information.



Book Groups

Book Club Leaders: Please take a celebratory "End of Year" photo of your book club meetings. Screen shots of Zoom meetings are welcome as well. We want to celebrate your literary accomplishments. aauwwhcnews@gmail.com

Afternoon Contemporary Literature

Wednesday, April 5, 1:00 p.m. Chancellor: The Remarkable Odyssey of Angela Merkel by Kati Marton 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

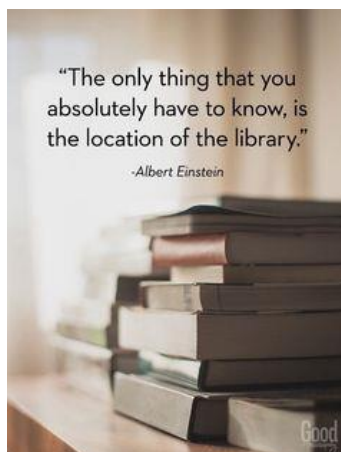
Wednesday, April 4, 1:00 p.m. Allie and Bea by Catherine Ryan Hyde. The group will meet at the home of Barbara Butler, 13719 Carriage Walk Lane. For more information, contact Coordinator, Sharon Pope (713-376-0940).

Enjoying History Book Club

Monday, April 10 at 1:30 p.m. We will discuss War: How Conflict Shaped Us by Margaret MacMillan. Mary Andersen will be our leader. We will meet by Zoom or TBA. Please email me with any questions. Nancy Guilloud, nanguilloud@aol.com.

Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, April 3, 5:00 p.m. at Los Tios Restaurant. Animal Dreams by Barbara Kingsolver. Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085, WCGLIDE@gmail.com.



Mystery Book Club

Tuesday, April 18, 1:30 p.m.

The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman
Leader and Hostess: Marilyn Arendt, 12414 Stafford Springs Drive, Houston
Contacts: Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190, armstrong.melba@comcast.net and Pat Pease popeace@aol.com.

Outstanding Literature

The group will meet on **Tuesday, April 11, at 9:30 a.m.** We will have an excellent breakfast and a discussion of selected John Donne poetry, led by Joan Belk. 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, April 27 at 2:30 p.m.

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek by Kim Michele Richardson

Discussion Leader – Roslyn Metchis

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

Culture Interest Group Headed to Aggie Land – April 12

Our excursion on **Wednesday, April 12** will take us to the **George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum** at College Station. You will learn about the long-distinguished life of service of our Forty First President through films, a Museum Guide, and an Audio Tour that can be downloaded and scanned on your phone at the library.

The facility includes a section of the Berlin Wall, replicas of Bush's Oval Office and his Camp David Office, and an area dedicated to First Lady Barbara Bush. The tranquil gravesites are within walking distance. As a bonus, there is a visiting exhibition devoted to the life of Nelson Mandela.



After lunch, we will mosey over to the A&M campus next door where we will tour the Texas A&M Traditions Plaza and Bonfire Memorial.

Cost is \$7.00 per person + \$1 cash for the bus driver. Lunch will be on your own at C&J Barbecue. To reserve your spot, please send your check, payable to Marie Helmy, to 15522 Laurel Heights Dr, Houston, TX 77084.

The bus will leave promptly at **9:30 a.m.** from Parking Lot B at 12161 Barryknoll Lane across from Memorial City Mall. Expected return time is 4:30pm.

The Culture Interest Group has a Bat Date in May



The Culture Group will sail the scenic Buffalo Bayou waterway on a 90-minute round trip visit to the Waugh Street Bat Colony on the evening of **Friday, May 19th**. From downtown Houston's Allen Landing, we will make our way up the bayou while learning about the storied nursery colony of 250,000+ Mexican Free-tailed bats.

Our onboard Bat expert will share details about their eating patterns, behavior, and significant contributions to our area's ecosystem. Emergence will take place on their time schedule at dusk. Space is limited (21). Though we have done many boat trips in our adventured past, this is our first time offering a bat tour. You

won't want to miss it.

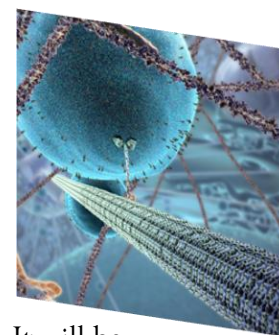
Cost of the trip is \$27. Reserve one of our 21 seats by sending your check, payable to Susan Boone, to 2919 Kevin LN, Houston, TX 77043, or you can use Venmo.



Susan Boone
@Susan-Boone-7

WISE - Women Interested in STEM Education

Please join our group as we discuss the book *Song of the Cell: An Exploration of Medicine and the New Human* by Pulitzer Prize winning author Siddhartha Mukherjee on **Monday, April 17th at 10:00 a.m.** at Rose Ennis' townhouse. We will discuss the evolution of the microscope and its impact on scientific discoveries. We will look at the work of scientists over time and how their research was either acclaimed, disputed, or banned. Also, enjoy watching an animated presentation of cell division. We will move through the discovery of single celled organisms to the billions of cells that make up our own bodies, and examine the present medical interventions utilized through the contemporary reengineering of cells to fight diseases. It will be a wise and wonderful morning so plan now to join the conversation!



RSVP to Rose Ennis if you are planning to attend at roseleeennis@gmail.com or call 281-755-6483. Light refreshments will be served. Rose's address is: 1607 Prairie Mark Lane, Houston, TX 77077 located between Wilcrest and Kirkwood.

Karen North, Carolyn Morris, and Rose Ennis

Great Decisions

First and Third Thursday Afternoon Group



The Great Decisions First and Third Thursday afternoon group will meet **April 6, 2023, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.** to discuss "Politics in Latin America," and on **April 20, 2023, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**, to discuss "Global Famine." If interested in further information and details, please contact group coordinator, Martha Ewell, (tel.) 713-782-2084.



Inside the Loop Group

Great Decisions Inside the Loop meets every other Tuesday via ZOOM. On **April 4th** the topic is "China and America: Back to the Future" and on **April 18th** the topic is "Economic Warfare and U.S. Policy". For more information contact Pat Thomsen at 713-302-8899 or Linda Marlin at 713-465-9466.



The Wednesday Evening Group



The Wednesday Evening Group Meets from **7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays** via ZOOM. On **April 12** the topic is "China and America: Back to the Future". On **April 26** the topic is "Economic Warfare and U.S. Policy". Please contact coordinator Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 or willetten@gmail.com.

Garden Divas



The Garden Divas will visit the newly opened Land Bridge in Memorial Park on **Tuesday, April 4.**

Memorial Park has always been a haven for Houstonians, a place to escape the concrete jungle and reconnect with nature. Now the 1,500-acre urban park has added the Kinder Land Bridge and Cyvia and Melvyn Wolff Prairie that links the north and south halves of the park. But in the years since its construction and as various roadways were added, the park became divided into 27 pieces. The goal for the re-design was to create a land bridge that did more than serve a functional purpose of joining two spaces. This bridge would

accommodate spots for family-friendly activities, areas for passive recreation such as wildlife and prairie viewing, trails to [Buffalo Bayou](#), and safe access and connectivity to different sections of the park.

Nearly 45 acres of native Gulf Coast prairie have been planted along the corridor, creating a more resilient ecology while providing a utilitarian benefit—the managing of stormwater to decrease the flooding notorious to this city. Memorial Park Conservancy’s BioCycle Program composts trees lost in the 2011 drought, along with those removed within Memorial Park, into a rich soil that provides a healthier habitat for wildlife and absorbs greater amounts of stormwater. There are two mounds forming the land bridge. The land drapes itself over the tunnels—two in each direction that open in the middle for glimpses of the park from the road.

You can spot denizens of the park up or down because while the land bridge provides connectivity for wildlife *over* Memorial Drive, a stream corridor constructed through the prairie and a culvert provide connectivity *under* Memorial Drive. Nicknamed the “critter crossing,” the culvert even provides shelving for animals, so they can scurry from one side of the park to the other and avoid the water below.

We are looking forward to our visit to this spectacular area of Memorial Park. The group will carpool from the parking lot at south of Memorial City off Barryknoll at **9:30 a.m.** We should arrive at 10:00 a.m. at the Cullen Running Center, 7575 North Picnic Lane. Paid parking is available there and we will walk to the nearby bridge. Hat and sunscreen are highly suggested.



Weather pending, a picnic in the park – possibly catered from the Belong Kitchen is the plan. (No need to pack your own lunch!)

Susan Boone

smboone@gmail.com

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 joining 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.





Cultural Outings are
Super Fun and Tasty!

Garden Divas
discover all aspects
of horticulture.





<i>Rose Ennis</i>	<i>Apr 03</i>
<i>Elizabeth Martin</i>	<i>Apr 03</i>
<i>Jane Campbell</i>	<i>Apr 04</i>
<i>Beryl Hogshead</i>	<i>Apr 05</i>
<i>Martha Armstrong</i>	<i>Apr 10</i>
<i>Pamela Ossorio</i>	<i>Apr 10</i>

<i>Marjorie Poole</i>	<i>Apr 11</i>
<i>Carole Ballew</i>	<i>Apr 12</i>
<i>Patricia Cordrey</i>	<i>Apr 13</i>
<i>Susan Duntun</i>	<i>Apr 13</i>
<i>Hazel Kjos</i>	<i>Apr 18</i>
<i>Diana Guarniere</i>	<i>Apr 22</i>
<i>Fran Macy</i>	<i>Apr 22</i>
<i>Patricia Driscoll</i>	<i>Apr 24</i>
<i>Barbara Kyse</i>	<i>Apr 25</i>
<i>Carolyn Morris</i>	<i>Apr 25</i>
<i>Anne Amador</i>	<i>Apr 29</i>

Member Updates

Barbara "Bob" McDonald New Contact Information

2125 Brinker Rd., #128
Denton, TX 76208
940 735 3903

Dorothy Clooney New Email

Dorothy.clooney@gmail.com