



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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January 2024 Newsletter

Issue 5

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February 2024 Deadline

January 15, 2024

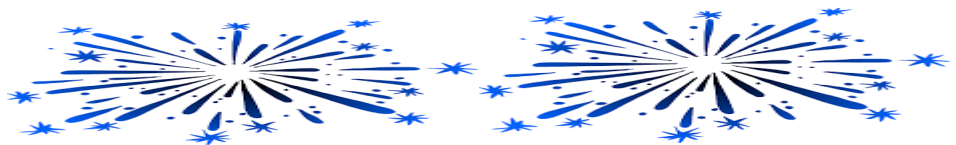
Stay informed!

Branch website: aauw-whc.org

National website: aauw.org



The AAUW West Harris County Branch Meeting is **Saturday, January 20, 2024, at 9:30 am** at the Tracy Gee Community Center. We have a treat to kick off 2024!



Our January presentation will be led by our own Branch President, Poupette Farnell, who will be joined by Mary Smith, President of AAUW of Texas, as well as long-time West Harris County Branch member and a past branch president, Diana Guarniere.

They will guide us through the history of AAUW, AAUW in Texas, and we will learn how our own branch was founded in Houston in 1976! The presentation will be followed by a Q&A. We have invited other Houston-area branch members to join us for what will be an informative, engaging, and enjoyable meeting.

Lilian Care, VP Programs



I am excited that we are starting the year by focusing on AAUW. Our AAUW-WHC Branch is fortunate to have so many activities and fun events, but we sometimes forget AAUW's rich history and its strong commitment to advancing gender equality for women and girls.

AAUW of Texas President, Mary Smith, will be our guest speaker at the January branch meeting where she will discuss AAUW's history and accomplishments. I hope you will all be able to attend and bring your friends with you to find out more about our amazing organization.

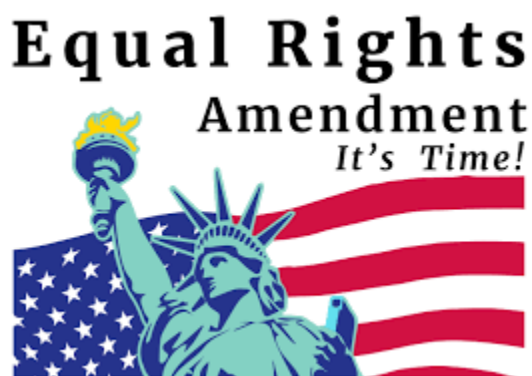
In the near future, you will receive a brief survey requesting your input as to how you would like to participate in our branch. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and peaceful New Year

Poupette Farnell, President



PUBLIC POLICY EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT



December 13, 2023 marked the 100th anniversary of the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in Congress. There was a march and rally in Washington, DC to commemorate this event. Our AAUW CEO, Gloria L. Blackwell, spoke on Capitol Hill at the rally in support of the ERA. The amendment has had a long record of passage in the House of Representatives. It must be ratified by 38 states to be an amendment to our US constitution. To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society, AAUW advocates the passage and ratification of the ERA as one of our Public Policy Priorities for 2023- 2025. The ERA is gaining momentum.

Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy & Member Advocacy reports the following:

- In 2020, Virginia made history by becoming the final state needed to ratify the ERA.
- At the beginning of this year, resolutions were introduced to remove the ERA's arbitrary deadline and affirm ratification. This is the first time ERA legislation will be led by women in both the House and Senate!
- In March, the first-ever Congressional Caucus for the ERA was launched.
- In April, the Senate took the first vote on ERA in decades.
- This summer, we saw the introduction of the ERA Now resolution, which directs the Chief Administrator of the National Archives to certify and publish the ERA as the 28th Amendment of the Constitution. Two things are needed in the House of Representatives. Joint Resolution 25 now has 208 co-sponsors including thirteen members of the Texas Delegation. There are currently 10 other co-sponsors of House Resolution 25 from various states who need to sign. To avoid having to be scheduled for a vote by the Speaker of the House, 218 Representatives must sign the discharge petition. Each representative must go to the House floor and personally sign the petition as 204 members have already done. Twelve of the co-sponsors from Texas have signed House Discharge Petition #6. Over the next few weeks, there will be a big push for Representatives to sign the discharge petition. As an AAUW member, you can take immediate action to advocate and support this effort by following this link to contact your representatives: <https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/era/>.

Why is this important? Having the ERA in effect could help move pay-equity legislation through Congress, add more protections against sex-based discrimination in schools and in workplaces, and ensure much-needed access to reproductive health care.

Georgia Kimmel, Public Policy Chair

For more information follow these links to AAUW, ERA Coalition, and The League of Women Voters:

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

<https://www.eracoalition.org/partners/>

<https://www.lwv.org/blog/100-years-equal-rights-amendment>

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/aauw-public-policy-priorities/>



MEMBERSHIP

Come one, come all! The January meeting for West Harris County Branch (WHC) will have a special guest, Mary Smith, President of AAUW of Texas. Mary, along with members of WHC, will review the National, State, and Local philosophy and the opportunities to get involved. If you are a new member this may be your first time hearing a presentation about this valuable organization. If you have been a member for years, it will be an opportunity to remember the reason AAUW is still an active organization. Membership in AAUW is more than the activities that a branch offers each month. It is the force behind advancing equality of opportunities in this world for girls and women.

Remember, prospective new members are welcome ANY TIME of year! Bring a friend/potential member to the January meeting it will be a great way to start a New Year!

See you at Tracy Gee Community Center, **January 20th**.

Carolyn Stoffel, Membership Vice President

JANUARY 2024 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

Hiking Honeys



The Hiking Honeys will head to Keith Weiss Park for our hike on **Thursday, January 18th**. Keith Weiss Park is located at 12300 Aldine Westfield Road, Houston, TX 77093. (Information: 832-395-7000.)

This is a beautiful 500-acre park with an enhanced ecosystem service. The well-designed trail winds first through a pine forest to emerge on the eastern bank of the lake and then reconnects to the pine forest trail. Keith Weiss is home to many birds, including egrets and herons, as well as animals native to ponds. Sara Dalton will be leading this hike. More details will be forthcoming to Hiking Honey roster members closer to the date of the hike. Contact Sara Dalton at dalton.sara@comcast.net or Mary Ann McMordie at mamcmordie@gmail.com if you would like more information.

Great Decisions: Afternoon and Evening Groups

Both afternoon and evening groups meet via ZOOM. All branch members are invited to join. Please contact the coordinators for more information and to receive the ZOOM link.

INSIDE THE LOOP meets Tuesday afternoons on the first and third Tuesdays from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. February meetings are: February 6th and February 20th. For further information please contact coordinator, Pat Thomsen at 713-302-8899 or patthom2@bcglobal.net or Linda Marlin at marlinl@com.cast.net.

THE EVENING GROUP meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The February meetings are: February 14th topic – Mideast Realignment, February 28th topic – Climate technology and competition, discussion leaders Toby and Arun Singhania. For further information please contact coordinator, Willette Norman at 281-450-8875 or willetten@gmail.com.



Byway Birders

On Saturday, January 13th, Byway Birders will visit San Bernard NWR and Brazoria NWR. We will meet at San Bernard NWR at Bobcat Woods at 9:30 a.m. We will have lunch at Dido's Restaurant in Brazoria. Afterward, we'll go to Brazoria NWR. Contact Peg McNealy with questions. 281-679-7299 or peg525@gmail.com.

Save the date: We will have a birding trip to Rockport February 9-12. We will go to Rockport to see Whooping Cranes and other winter birds in the area. We will go to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Goose Island State Park and other parks to see the wildlife. We may go to Corpus Christi if time permits. We will stay at either the La Quinta or the Holiday Inn.

Please let Miriam Vyles know if you are going on this trip. She can also give you info if you want to make your own reservations for a boat trip. mvyles123@gmail.com.

Bridge Groups



Fun and friendship await you in the two active AAUW bridge groups. If you are interested in getting on the sub list or would like more information, contact one or both coordinators listed below.

3rd Thursday (10:30 a.m.) Peg McNealy, 281.679.7299
2nd Friday Duplicate Bridge (11:00 a.m.) Cheryl Smith, 402.651.2445.

Culture Interest Group



The Culture Group will visit the Innovation Corridor in Mid Town on **Wednesday, January 17th**. This is a First-Time destination you won't want to miss! Ion is Houston's new home for the innovation community. In the heart of mid-town along the Light Rail line, the ION building is home to a Who's Who of companies cross collaborating on solutions in Energy, Education, Healthcare, Technology, and Venture Capital. It's the type of exciting activity you want to have going

on in our city. Originally the Sears department store (built in 1939), the ION building was the first to open in May 2022 in this corridor. We are fortunate to have a guided tour by Joey Sanchez, Senior Director of Ecosystems. As part of the tour, our guide will share what is planned as this Rice University acreage grows up.

The group will travel to the Ion District via a Precinct 3 bus from the parking lot off Barryknoll at Memorial City. Plan to be on the bus by **9 a.m.** which will take you to the old Astro World lot by NRG Stadium where we will board the Metro red-line to the ION building. (Please have (\$1.25 for fare). After our tour, we will have lunch at the Lymbar, an open theatre kitchen specializing in Latin and Mediterranean small plates and shareables. We should be back at Memorial City by 3 pm. Contact Susan Boone for more information or to reserve a seat at 713-854-7537 or smboone@gmail.com.



SAVE THE DATE! BLACK HISTORY MONTH – FEBRUARY 26th

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY –TOUR OF MURALS

A LEGACY WORTH SHARING!

AAUW West Harris County Chapter will be visiting the Houston HBCU, Texas Southern University, to experience the life and work of world-renowned artist Dr. John Biggers. As the founder of the art department at TSU, Dr. Biggers developed the murals program. The group will tour the historic murals that are in the major buildings on campus. The legacy of justice, politics, and humanities at Texas Southern University will also be highlighted by visiting the Mack H. Hannah Hall, Barbara Jordan and Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs, and the Thurgood Marshall School of Law. The visit will be on **Monday, February 26** from **9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** You can contact Michele Taylor (281-851-6598) for information.

Vicarious Voyagers



Vicarious Voyagers' January meeting will be **10 a.m. Sunday, January 28th** at the home of Hazel Kjos, 6326 Logan Creek Lane in Sugar Land. Please RSVP to Hazel at 713-499-9668.

Jane Wood will present a 4-part exploration of the Lewis & Clark expedition beginning with the January meeting. Split up chronologically, she will recount this historic expedition's beginnings: the journey up the Missouri River to its headwaters in their search for an all-water route to the Pacific, the consummate Northwest Passage. Then she will "get them home", along with their accomplishments and influences. Using a variety of materials and presentation styles, she will relate the stories that describe how today's continental United States took form. If you want to prepare for Lewis and Clark, you can read Stephen Ambrose's book Undaunted Courage. Also, a good read for dog lovers is Bound for the Western Sea, The Canine Account of the Lewis and Clark Expedition by Laura Lee Yates. If you want to bring food linked to our topic, The Lewis and Clark Cookbook, by Leslie Mansfield is a book to look into for ideas.

For further information, please contact coordinator, Hazel Kjos at 713-499-9668 or filbertkjos@gmail.com.

Gourmet Groups – Classic and Nouveau Combined

The Gourmet Group will meet in the home of Sharon and Eric Jorgeson on **Saturday, January 13th at 11 a.m.** for a New Orleans-themed brunch. Recipe ideas will be sent out to those on the mailing list in early January. For further information or to be placed on the mailing list, please contact the co-chairs: Barb Cook 713705-7832 or Kris Bybee-Finley 304-610-8708.



Garden Divas



The Garden Divas will venture to Kleb Woods Preserve on **Tuesday, January 2**. The Nature Preserve provides a unique window into the environmental and cultural history of northwest Harris County. We will have a guided tour of this country gem near the big city. Kleb Woods Nature Preserve, 20303 Draper Rd, Tomball, was a family farm, once owned by descendants of one of the early German immigrants who settled in this part of Harris County in the 1840s.

The immigrant was Conrad Kleb. One of his grandsons, Edward Kleb, assembled this farm between 1904 and 1933, in three tracts, totaling 132 acres. A small part of the property, well removed from the Kleb house, was opened as Kleb Woods Nature Preserve in 1994. The purchase arrangement allowed Elmer to continue living in the house and he lived there until he died. Elmer was buried with the rest of this family in the nearby Roberts Cemetery.

After our tour, we will dine at Season's Harvest Café, 17303 Shaw Rd in Cypress. Nestled on an old homestead acreage between equestrian fields and newly built Cypress dream homes, is what is known as a "hidden gem." During your visit here you will engage in a backyard-to-table encounter with freshly harvested goodness and culinary art. Chef Jo and her team of artists will create each of our menus based on the seasonal harvest, grown organically in their own backyard. We will meet at the Barryknoll Parking lot at Memorial City for carpool at **9:00 a.m.**

Pease contact Susan Boone, smboone@gmail.com, to be included in this trip and for reservations at the restaurant.

Book Groups

Afternoon Contemporary Literature

We will be meeting on **Wednesday, Jan. 3rd at 1:30 p.m.** at Eagle's Trace. We will discuss Bright Creatures by Shelby VanPelt. The discussion leader is Mary Dodson. Please contact coordinator Linda Morgan at 281-989-6499 or Cheryl Smith at 402-651-2445 for more information.

Contemporary Readers

On **Wednesday, Jan. 3rd at 1:00 p.m.** we will be discussing All the Broken Places by John Boyne. Our group will meet at MDUMC West Campus at 13186 Memorial Drive, Room 462, in the TJ Maxx shopping center. For more information, contact Coordinator, Sharon Pope, 713-376-0940, spope576@gmail.com or Co-coordinator, Cathy Urquhart, 832-454-5017, curquhart80@gmail.com.

Enjoying History Book Club

Welcome to the New Year! We will meet on **Monday, January 8th at 1:30 p.m.** at the Tracy Gee Community Center Library. We are discussing The Code Breaker by Walter Isaacson led by Cindy Hickok. Please email me with any questions, Nancy Guilloud, nanguilloud@aol.com.

Evening Contemporary Literature

Please join us on **Monday, January 8th at 5:00 pm** when we will discuss We Begin at the End by Chris Whitaker. We will meet at Los Tios Mexican Restaurant, Memorial Dr. at Kirkwood. The coordinator is Jo Glidewell, wcglide@gmail.com; 936-327-2085.

Mystery Book Club

We will meet on **Tuesday, January 16th at 1:30 p.m.** at the Tracy Gee Community Center Library to discuss The Cellist by Daniel Silva. The leader will be Frances Mayberry. Please contact Pat Pease popease@aol.com or Kris Bybee-Finley, 304-610-8708, brazitku@gmail.com for more information.

Outstanding Literature

For our January meeting we will discuss Horse by Geraldine Brooks. The meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 9th at 9:30 a.m.** We will have our usual excellent breakfast and then the discussion. Our meetings happen at La Madeleine, Carillon, The Wine Cave, 10001 Westheimer Road. Coordinator is Leigh Rappole, leighrap@aol.com, 281-596-016, or Barbara Butler, barbarabutler2021@gmail.com, 713-305-0570.

Zoom Eclectic Book Group

We will meet on **Thursday, January 18th at 2:30 p.m.** and discuss New Beginnings: From Behind the Iron Curtain by Antonia Duridanova. The leader is Margaret Carlson. All meetings occur on ZOOM. Members are welcome to join us for one or all the books. Please email Carolyn Morris (Coordinator) at morriscarolyn16@gmail.com for the Zoom invitation. The Co-coordinator is Pat Thompsen, patthom2@sbcglobal.net, 713-302-8899





JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Joyce Pritchard Jan 01

Pat Thomsen J Jan 01

Julia Ray Jan 02

Poleteme Sappenfield Jan 04

Barbara Butler Jan 06

Margaret Chapman Jan 06

Edie O'Brien Jan 07

Anita Woods Jan 09

Nancy Guilloud Jan 11

Frances Mayberry Jan 16

Lisa Rankin Jan 18

Suzanne Dalati Jan 22

Roslyn Metchis Jan 30

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO DIRECTORY

Please delete **Janice McNeil's** home number; use her cell phone number only.

Please add contact information for a returning member:

Jennifer Gillespie-Malone
12987 Trail Hollow, Houston TX 77079
713-899-5330
jennigillespie1010@gmail.com