



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Volume XXXXXIII

March 2024 Newsletter

Issue 7

President

Poupette Farnell
aauwpfarnell@gmail.com

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Josephine "Jo" Glidewell

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Lilian Care

Membership Vice President

Carolyn Stoffel

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Helen Santire

Recording Secretary

Peggy Edwards

Finance Officer

Diana Tiberia

Corresponding Secretary

Becky French

Newsletter Editor

Laura Fiorentino Cahill
aauwhcnews@gmail.com

April 2024 Deadline

March 15, 2024

Stay informed!

Branch website: aauw-whc.org

National website: aauw.org

AAUW WEST HARRIS COUNTY BRANCH MARCH MEETING

Saturday, March 16, 2024, from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
TRACY GEE COMMUNITY CENTER

West Harris County Branch – Spring Potluck Brunch and Social!
For our March meeting we are having a potluck brunch and social.
We ask members to bring a brunch dish to share for the meeting.



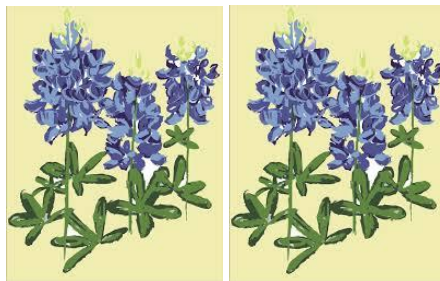
The business part of our March meeting will be the election of 2024-2025 branch officers. See the following page for the list of nominees.

Lilian Care, VP Programs



It's a beautiful time of the year in Houston. And, we have some very interesting events to look forward to. At our potluck meeting on **Saturday, March 16th**, we will socialize and elect our new officers, who will be installed at our June luncheon. Also, the AAUW Texas Convention is on **Sunday, April 7th**. (Mark your calendar and be on the lookout for more information regarding the convention.) And, of course, our Fashion Show is on **Sunday, May 5th**. Hope to see you at all these fun and exciting events.

Poupette Farnell, President



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NOMINEES

The following ladies have been nominated for the following offices:

- President: Jo Glidewell
- President-Elect: Lilian Care
- Membership VP: Kris Bybee-Finley
- AAUW Funds-Assistant VP: Maureen Kraker
- Recording Secretary: Michele Taylor

Spread the word!

Please share this information with any family, friends, and/or organizations who may have contact with girls eligible for this year's scholarship.

**Attention High School Senior Girls
STEM Scholarship Opportunity \$3,500**



Thomsen-Baker-Telfer STEM Scholarship

3 scholarships will be awarded. One to a student in each of these districts: Alief I.S.D., Houston I.S.D. and Spring Branch I.S.D.

Application deadline: April 15, 2024

For information click the link below or scan the QR code to open the Application



<https://westharriscounty-tx.aauw.net/about/scholarships/2024-scholarship-application>

History of the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund

Wow, how the Fund has grown! The Fund was created in 1994 to honor Theodore E. Baker, son of Arlene Baker and William G. Telfer, son of Carol Telfer. Arlene and Carol each donated \$1,000 to begin the fund. For a number of years \$200 scholarships were awarded to 3 students, one each from Alief ISD, Houston ISD, and Spring Branch ISD. Today, the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund has \$68,388.57 in CD's and the checking account. This June we will give \$3,500 to each of the 3 students. We will also pay for their meal and one guest to attend the June Luncheon.

Our thanks go to the many members who have made donations this year. Each donation is a commitment to educating young women in STEM. This month the Fund had many notable happenings. Leon and Pat Thomsen made another \$10,000 donation to the Fund.

Mike Dach, who is retired from Chevron, made a donation for the Dach family (Pat). He then reached out to Chevron for the corporation's matching donation. To receive the donation, paperwork was completed so the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund could be listed on the Blackbaud giving site. This is a world-wide site that is used by many corporations. Please contact Carolyn Morris if you need any help with matching donations. We have also discovered that many financial institutions offer matching grants. This spring, the Scholarship Fund will be setting up a committee to advise the Fund on how best to invest our endowment funds. We are looking for West Harris County members who are interested in being on this committee. Please contact Brenda Moss or Carolyn Morris if you are interested.

PUBLIC POLICY

The Primary is the Most Important Election

Recently, there was a six-issue Houston Chronicle **Welcome to Texas Primary [Simplified]** newsletter written by politics and government reporter, Cayla Harris. The following excerpts provide important takeaways:

“Texas is one of 16 states that has an open primary. That means you can cast a ballot in either party’s primary no matter if you identify as a Republican or a Democrat, but you can only vote in one party’s election.”

“So, if you’re an independent voter with a distaste for both parties, you can still participate in the state’s March 5 primary election. You just have to decide which ballot makes the most sense for you and show up to your polling place.”

“The open primary system is great for encouraging voter participation, since every registered voter is allowed to cast a ballot.”

“Because of redistricting, most contests are decided during the primary. That could be the difference between a Republican who supports private school vouchers and one who doesn’t heading to Austin on your behalf. Or a Democrat who wants to reverse a ban on gender-affirming care for youth and one who wants to keep it becoming your representative in the Legislature. Your vote matters!”

“Historically, primary elections in Texas have been very low-turnout contests. In 2020, just about a quarter of all registered voters (4.1 million) cast a ballot in either primary. Compare that with a turnout of about 67 percent of registered voters (11.3 million) during the general election that year.”

“The people who vote in primary elections are usually the most motivated and passionate voters – and, in many cases, the most extreme. That’s true in both parties. Low turnout means that the results of the primary might not actually be representative of the general population, so it’s important to get out and vote. It’s your right!”

“Quick reminder that **all** members of the U.S. House and the Texas House are up for election this year, alongside a handful of state Senate seats. **This is also a big year for state House races** – and the future of education in Texas may depend on the results. The hottest primary contests in Texas this year:

Abbott is targeting Republicans who voted against his priority private school voucher plan. Paxton is campaigning against Republicans who voted to impeach him last year. Their conflicting priorities have pitted them against each other in at least 20 House races. That includes several Houston-area seats.

Six Democrats are vying to replace former state Sen. John Whitmire, who recently became the mayor of Houston.”

The deadline for requesting a mail-in ballot was February 23. Elections officials must receive your mail-in ballot by 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5 – Election Day – if the carrier envelope is not postmarked.

At the Texas Impact Legislative event in late January, these important points were emphasized:

- The primary election is the most important race for voters.



- 95% of Texas legislative races are decided in the primary.
- Don't let national elections distract from your community and state elections.
- If we want different outcomes, we must vote in every election.
- Sadly, 1 in 5 eligible adults has not registered to vote.

Texas has a history of a dismal turnout rate in primary elections. Can WHCB members increase the turnout by voting and encouraging others to vote? I hope so.

If you haven't voted, Go Vote!

Early voting takes place from Feb. 20 to March 1.

Election Day is March 5.

Welcome to Texas Primary [Simplified] newsletter

Additional resources:

League of Women Voters Primary Election Voters Guide <https://www.houstonvotersguide.org/>

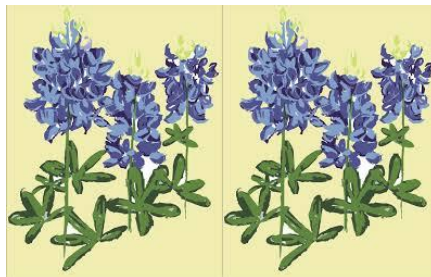
Nearly 18% of registered Texas voters cast 2022 primary ballots.

<https://www.texastribune.org/2022/02/14/texas-primary-voting-turnout/>

Analysis: The 3% of Texans deciding who governs the other 97%

<https://www.texastribune.org/2022/02/25/texas-election-turnout/>

Georgia Kimmel, Public Policy Chair



MEMBERSHIP:

February is the month of Valentine's Day, President's Day (Abe & George), and it is the month candidates are introduced for branch election in March. Mary Smith and Diana Guarniere reviewed the strength of AAUW women of the past at our January Meeting. It has taken women with persistence to obtain equality in a male oriented society. It takes great strength and determination to make changes and we must actively get involved to do so. Compared to many AAUW branches, WHC is a large branch. We have an opportunity to make our size count in our community as it did during the Expanding Your Horizons years. This is a great time to support new board members and get involved in events and activities coming up in 2024-2025 year. At the January meeting we also had two new members join. Please welcome Mitzi Snell and Kathy Bliss. Happy "almost Spring"!

Carolyn Stoffel, Membership V-P



SCAN TO
DONATE TODAY!

About AAUW's Greatest Needs

We are tenacious and trailblazing - advocating for women and girls since 1881 and into the future!



The Impact of Your Support

AAUW benefits from diversified revenue sources which include contributions, a generously supported endowment, and dues revenue. However - **dues revenue does not cover the full cost of supporting our membership** – over 10,000 of our members (and growing) are Honorary Lifetime members (non-dues paying). Our endowed Fellowships and Grants funding will sustain these restricted programs in perpetuity – however **only 5% of our Net Assets are unrestricted.**

Supporting the sustainability and effective operations of the National organization directly benefits our Members, Fellowships and Grants Alumnae, Advocates and the communities we serve.

Our Focus



Advocacy

Our members, supporters and staff work on local, state and federal levels to support laws and policies that enable women's success.



Education

We champion equal opportunities in education. Though more than 60% of college graduates are women, they face barriers and biases throughout their schooling.



Economic Security

We've been working to narrow the gender pay gap, which greets women as soon as they enter the workforce and widens throughout their working lives.

How are donations to Greatest Needs Used?

Research & Policy

Updates to and dissemination of our widely-cited signature research reports: and advocating for AAUW's values – our Research and Policy budgets are supported almost entirely by Greatest Needs

Programs

Staff time and other direct expenses for NCCWSL, Salary Negotiation, Financial Literacy and Leadership Programs

Membership

Supporting our members with resources and opportunities to engage. Dues do not cover the full cost of our membership support

Communications

Keeping AAUW at the forefront of a National dialogue about Women's Equity, growing our media exposure and maintaining our prominent seat at the table



CHARITY NAVIGATOR
★★★★ Four Star Charity

Donate and Join Us Today!

www.aauw.org/give

YOU ARE INVITED TO
WEST HARRIS COUNTY AAUW

Celebrating Mother's Day

at

Chico's/Soma

12850 Memorial Drive

Town & Country

**\$30 ticket benefiting:
AAUW FUNDS**

AAUW Greatest Needs Fund (or others) to help further our national mission by going to aauw.org and using your credit card, preferred as fast, convenient, and safe.

1. Go to aauw.org and log in.
2. On the left in the menu, click on "My Affiliations", confirm "West Harris County" as your Primary Branch
3. Click the red **DONATE** button and continue with your donation
4. IMPORTANT – Please email your receipt for your reserved spot to Diane Statham - distatham@msn.com
5. Purchase no later than May 1st - No checks will be accepted at the door

OR

Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship

CHECK ONLY - C/O Carolyn Morris

11159 Riverview Way

Houston, TX 77042

SUNDAY, MAY

5

2024

5:30 - 7:30 PM

MARCH 2024 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

Hiking Honeys



On **Thursday, March 21st**, the Hiking Honeys will meet at a new hiking destination, Hermann Park. Located north of the Medical Center and east of Rice University, Hermann Park has much to offer, including the Houston Zoo, Miller Outdoor Theatre, The Houston Museum of Natural Science, as well as multiple

garden areas. Jane Wood will be guiding our group on a two-mile walk on nice even trails. Our hike will be followed by lunch at Barnaby's on Binz Street near the Park. Those carpooling from Memorial City Mall plus anyone wishing to meet at our destination, please meet at parking lot C located at 1500 Hermann Park. More details will be forthcoming to Hiking Honey roster members closer to the date of the hike. Contact Jane Wood at 832-302-6224 if you would like more information.

Great Decisions: Afternoon and Evening Groups

March dates for the Wednesday evening Great Decisions: **March 13th** - Science Across Borders, discussion leaders Pat and Mike Dach; **March 27th** - U.S. - China trade Rivalry, discussion leader Jenni Gillespie-Malone. Please contact Willette Norman at 281-450-8875 or willetten@sbcglobal.net to be put on the contact list. The afternoon group will be discussing the same topics and will meet every other **Tuesday at 3:00 pm**. Contact Pat Thomsen at patthom2@sbcglobal.net or 713-302-8899 for further information. Great Decision groups began meeting in February. 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.

Gourmet Groups – Classic and Nouveau Combined

The Gourmet group will meet **Saturday, March 9th** from **6:30-9:00 pm** for our next dinner. The dinner will feature Argentinian food and will be held in the Kjos home. Space is limited. For further information, please contact the co-chairs: Barb Cook 713-705-7832 or Kris Bybee-Finley 304-610-8708.



Vicarious Voyagers

Our March meeting will take place on **Thursday, March 28th** at the home of Carolyn Morris, starting at **10:00a.m.** Her contact information is as follows:

MORRISCAROLYN16@GMAIL.COM

11159 Riverview Way

Houston, TX 77042

Phone number 713-560-1889

Please RSVP to either of us but remember Carolyn is the one who needs the head count for March. And don't forget to bring a dish to share.

Byway Birders



On **Saturday, March 2nd**, Edie Obrien will lead Byway Birders on a Duck Hunt. We should leave Houston by **8 a.m.** We will visit Cross Creek Ranch and Flewellen Creek Park in Fulshear, TX. It will involve walking on paved streets and grassy trails. For your GPS use 6450 Cross Creek Bend Ln, Fulshear TX. There are a lot of good eating spots nearby if you want to have lunch with the

group. Please let Edie know if you plan on going. Edie.Obrien@yahoo.com or 281-467-9047.

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

TUESDAY, MARCH 26th TOUR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS/MENIL CAMPUS

The Cultural Group will be taking a Preservation Houston tour of The University of St. Thomas and the Menil Campus. Two fabulous areas for the price of one! Once again, the tour will be led by renowned historian – Jim



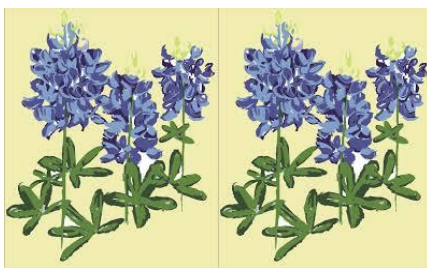
Parsons. The University of St. Thomas broke with tradition when it hired Philip Johnson to design its new campus in 1956. Though Johnson took inspiration from the modern architecture of Mies van der Rohe, his campus plan was influenced by something much older: Thomas Jefferson's 1818 design for the University of Virginia. This tour will focus on the development of the university's campus and the buildings of the adjacent Menil campus, which include the Rothko Chapel and the Menil Collection Twombly Gallery. Please join us to enjoy all this and more. After this walking tour, we will have lunch at Southern Yankee Crafthouse nearby. Buses will leave from the usual spot across from Memorial City at **9:30**. The cost of the tour is \$15.00. You can pay Kathryn Motard via Zelle at 713-503-7885 or by check mailed to Kathryn Motard/4035 Grennoch Ln./Houston, TX 77025. Remember your \$1.00 for the bus driver. If you are meeting us at the University of St. Thomas, please tell me so I can send parking instructions. The tour will begin at 10:00 am. Lunch will be on your own.

Garden Divas

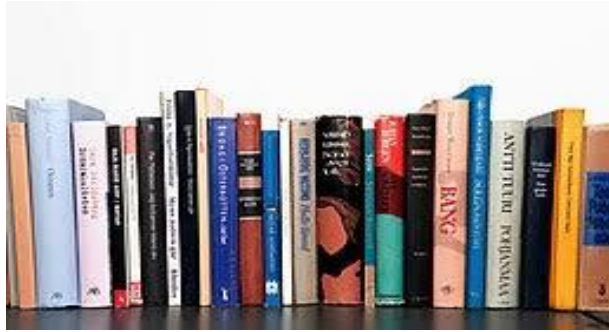


The Antique Rose Emporium Nursery and Display Gardens- 10000 FM 50, Brenham, Texas 77833 - is eight acres of award-winning display gardens, where inspiration starts and can be achieved. From tried-and-true perennials to tiny succulents, drought-tolerant offerings, bulbs, garden supplies, and a gift shop, there is so much to see. We will carpool from Memorial City Parking Lot South of Barryknoll on **Tuesday, March 5th**. We will leave at **8:30 a.m.** and plan to be at the Rose Garden close to 10 a.m.

There is a very interesting history behind the gardens, and we are in for a huge treat. Please check out their founding story at <https://antiqueroseemporium.com/pages/our-story>. After our visit to the Gardens, we are in for a culinary treat at Bevers Kitchen in Chappell Hill, 5162 Main Street. (The website claims Homestyle cooking at its best.) This modified Victorian-style cottage was built around 1907. For many years it was known as the Crockett House after its long-time owner, Jessie Crockett, Chappell Hill's postmaster from 1915-1935. Many residents took piano lessons here, presumably from Jessie's wife. The home was later used as a rental property, the Greenhouse Restaurant, and a weekend retreat. Our final visit will be to the Bluebonnet House and Garden Center for a nice stroll through their extensive nursery and a delightful gift shop. This should be a fabulous outing. We should be back in Houston before 3 p.m. We were unable to get a Precinct bus, but several of us have large vehicles if you see things you cannot resist to bring back to Houston. Please complete the form at the following link: <https://forms.gle/ahc5zxbT8GTd3rwG8> (If the link does not work for you, please email smboone@gmail.com). I hope to see you soon.



Book Groups



Afternoon Contemporary Literature

We will be meeting on **Wednesday, March 6th at 1:00 p.m.** at Eagle's Trace for lunch. Starting at 1:30 p.m., we will discuss Fates and Furies by Lauren Groff. Please contact coordinator Linda Morgan at 281-989-6499 or Cheryl Smith at 402-651-2445 for more information.

Contemporary Readers

On **Wednesday, March 6th at 1:00 p.m.**, we will be discussing The White Lady by Jacqueline Winspear. 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

We will meet on **Monday, March 11th at 1:30 p.m.** at the Tracy Gee Community Center Library. We are discussing River of Gods by Candice Millard. Nancy Guilloud is the leader. Please email me with any questions, Nancy Guilloud, nanguilloud@aol.com.

Evening Contemporary Literature

Please join us on **Monday, March 4th at 5:00 p.m.** when we will discuss Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus. 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, March 19th at 1:30 p.m.** at the Tracy Gee Library to discuss Cat's Paw by Roger Scarlett. The leader is Melba Armstrong. Please contact Pat Pease popeace@aol.com or Kris Bybee-Finley, 304-610-8708, brazitku@gmail.com for more information.

Outstanding Literature

The Outstanding Literature book group will be meeting on **Tuesday, March 12th at 9:30 a.m.** We will meet at our usual location, La Madeleine, Carillon, 10001 Westheimer. We will discuss Song of the Lark, by Willa Cather. Peg McNealy will be our discussion leader. Don't forget that we switched March with last October! Leigh Rappole is the coordinator, leighrap@aol.com, 281-596-0161. The co-coordinator is Barbara Butler, and she can be reached at barbarabutler2021@gmail.com, 713-305-0570. You know, we love our books, and we love our laughs!

Zoom Eclectic Book Group

ZOOM Electric Book Group will be meeting on **Thursday, March 21st at 2:30 p.m.** to discuss Noah's Wife by T. K. Thorne. The leader is Susan Dunten. All meetings occur on ZOOM. Members and guests are welcome to join us for one or all the books. Please contact Carolyn Morris carolynmorris16@gmail.com to receive the link.



MARCH 2024 BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|--------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| Toby Singhanian | Mar 03 | Betsy Winn | Mar 15 |
| Mary Andersen | Mar 04 | Kathryn Palmisano | Mar 16 |
| Karen Harris | Mar 06 | Diane Treich | Mar 16 |
| Janice McNeil | Mar 07 | Susan Thompson | Mar 17 |
| Cynthia Wier | Mar 07 | Ann Sanders | Mar 24 |
| Linda Busch | Mar 08 | Rebecca French | Mar 27 |
| Margo Johnson | Mar 10 | Maria Straus | Mar 29 |
| Dorothy Lauterbach | Mar 10 | Mary Lou Reilly | Mar 30 |
| Sue Phipps | Mar 14 | | |

New Members:

Mitzi Snell
1807 Bradmore Dr
Houston, TX 77077
832-754-9824
Tamtara@sbcglobal.net

Kathy Bliss
12530 Piping Rock Rd
Houston, TX 77077
713-851-2558
KathyYbliss@gmail.com

Directory Update:

Pat Dach: new email – patdach@gmail.com

Diana Guarniere: delete home phone number. Use only cell phone 832-465-5578.