



# West Harris County Branch

## President

Anne Amador  
713-240-8095  
Amador.aauw@earthlink.net

## President Elect

Poupette Farnell

## Program Vice President

Lilian Care

## Membership Vice President

Carolyn Stoffel

## AAUW Funds Vice-

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Diane Statham

## Recording Secretary

Sheila Jaynes

## Finance Officer

Diana Tiberia

## Corresponding Secretary

Becky French

## Newsletter Editor

Kris Bybee-Finley  
aauwwhcnnews@gmail.com

## April, 2023 Deadline:

March 15, 2023

## Stay informed!

Branch website: [aauw-whc.org](http://aauw-whc.org)

## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Tracy Gee Community Center, 5577 Westheimer Drive and ZOOM

## Dr. Annie Benifield, President, League of Women Voters - Houston.

The League of Women Voters of Houston fosters a thriving democracy by engaging all people in the political process through nonpartisan information sharing, passionate civic engagement and by providing opportunities to participate in the democratic process.

The LWV believes in the power of every person to create a more perfect democracy and supports the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence for all to participate.



Dr. Annie Johnson Benifield, President, League of Women Voters-Houston. Experience: Retired Chair & Professor of Social Sciences Department, Lone Star College-Tomball. Awards: Rho Beta Beta Chapter of Omega Psi Phi 2020 Citizen of the Year; 2020 AAMU William Hooper Council Service Award; Lone Star College-Tomball 2019 Faculty Excellence Award, Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Month, November 2021; 2021 Advanced Equity HOWL Award, Lone Star College-Tomball, U. Chapter Expertise: Work with LWV-H on voter registration projects (Naturalization Ceremonies) for 20 plus years. Secretary, LWV-H 2015-2017. LWV-H Board Member 2012-2019. League of Women Voters- Houston; The Helen Hunter Award, June 2019 for advancing the mission of the LWV-H by bringing great credit to the League and benefit to the community.

*Lilian Care  
Program Director*

## Dear West Harris County Members,

Thanks to all of you who have sent me suggestions about possible branch-wide projects. Many of the suggestions have been centered on the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarships, either in the form of fundraising events, or as college-readiness events for middle-school or high-school students; both are great ideas! Our branch members continue to embrace the TBT scholarships with their donations and time, and there seems to be a common desire to strengthen the program even further. In that light, I've signed up for the College Admissions Counselling Certificate classes at Rice University in order to give me a better understanding of



how college admissions works; it became clear to me last year when looking over the applications for the TBT Scholarships that the girls applying weren't getting much college admissions help from their school counsellors. I've just finished the first class, about counselling first-generation college students – it was excellent – and will begin the second class this week. Whether the information I learn ever translates to a branch-wide project is uncertain, but I'm enjoying the experience!

Please come to our March 18<sup>th</sup> Branch Meeting at the Tracy Gee center; we'll be voting on our slate of officers for next year, and we need your presence! Of course, you'll be rewarded for your time with an excellent program, as usual. Be looking for announcements for our upcoming wonderful events this spring: the Style Show at Talbot's, and the Spring Luncheon where we present our scholarship winners. Hope to see you soon!

***Anne Amador, President***

## **Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship**

Thanks to the generous donations of AAUW-WHC members, the news about the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund continues to be good! We appreciate those who organized and attended our celebratory luncheon on February 24<sup>th</sup> at the SBISD's Art Museum. We are indebted to so many who have worked hard to create, administer, and support the scholarship. This event was totally underwritten so more money is available to encourage high school senior women who plan careers in STEM fields to attend 4-year colleges in the USA.

The application for the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship went live on our website on February 1<sup>st</sup> this year. Applicants have until April 14<sup>th</sup> to apply for this \$3,000 scholarship. The committee has sent e-mails to the College Readiness Counselors in Alief ISD, HISD, and SBISD.



If you want to share the link with possible applicants, use:  
<https://westharriscounty-tx.aauw.net/about/scholarships/>

If you are interested in viewing the application on our webpage for your own information, use this link:  
<https://westharriscounty-tx.aauw.net/>

Our selection committee is eager to begin the difficult work of evaluating applications in order to offer this scholarship to one deserving college-bound woman from each of the school districts listed above. It is a hard task, but the reward is great for all of us. Reading these amazing resumes and essays gives us all hope for the future as we get to know these young scholars!

***The Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Board***

## **Public Policy**

**Insights into what's going on at the Capitol and how constituents can make a difference.**

*Personal reflection after attending a meeting in Austin.*

Texas United Women in Faith has partnered for thirty-six years with Texas Impact for the programing of The Legislative Event. The program this year featured a variety of workshops, sessions, and speakers. The meeting was an informative event on policy issues to prepare us to have confident conversations with our

legislators. This year, with the Legislature in session, a trip to the capitol was a final highlight (even in the ice storm).

Our many speakers gave timely perspectives on current issues. For example, Terri Burke, Executive Director of Immunize USA, spoke of threats to public health from well-funded anti-vaccine groups. There is a movement to eliminate the school vaccination requirements, to limit employer rights, to remove government emergency use authorization, and to limit health education and access to vaccines that are known to prevent diseases, such as, Polio, Whooping Cough, and Measles. Vaccines keep us, our children, and grandchildren healthy and avoid serious side effects from many illnesses. We should oppose bills being filed to decrease funding for public health, to eliminate vaccine requirements, and penalize physicians who dismiss unvaccinated patients.



Another speaker, Diana Forrester, Director of Health Policy of Texans Care for Children, outlined the consequences of the end of the COVID-19 “Public Health Emergency” (PHE) declaration happening in March. Five million enrollees in Texas: children, mothers, and others will be reviewed and many who are no longer eligible will be disenrolled from Medicaid. Under normal Texas Medicaid guidelines only low-income children, pregnant and post-partum women and persons with disabilities are eligible for Medicaid. The PHE expanded Medicaid access for the last two years. Now from February 1 to March 1, all cases must be reviewed. Women who are more than two months past childbirth and children whose family income rose will be dropped. Communicating with so many individuals will likely lead to women and children missing out on the health care they are eligible for and urgently need. Others, who are no longer eligible, will

end up with no health insurance coverage.

Under PHE, post-partum women were receiving Medicaid for 12 months allowing them to keep seeing their doctor, afford medications, and catch other health problems, such as cancer, before those issues became more serious. Ms. Forrester pushed us to advocate for the permanently expansion of Medicaid post-partum coverage to 12 months.



The legislative visit training workshop included the dos and don'ts of talking with your legislator and their staff.

- Walk right in.
- Be polite; keep the visit short (five minutes).
- Introduce yourself by name and your connection to the district indicating organizations to which you belong: faith community, business, community organizations, etc.
- Don't have unrealistic expectations.
- You will likely see and talk with staff who will relay your views to their boss.
- Be prepared to present your story telling why you support or oppose a particular issue.
- According to Texas Impact “your stories and your experiences are powerful and impactful. They help amplify your voice and connect you with public policymakers setting policy.”
- Have a brief paragraph written or a handout about your position on your issue or policy concern to leave at the office.
- Afterwards, write a thank you note to reinforce your visit.
- Plan on visiting again soon.

There was so much more. Anyone interested in the legislative topics and process would find this event informative and inspiring.

Participation is a vital part of our democracy. For more information check out the Texas Impact website: <https://texasimpact.org/>

***Georgia Kimmel***  
***Public Policy Chair***

## **Nominations for 2023-2024**

Each March, AAUW-WHC elects officers for the following year. For 2023-2024 we have the following positions to be voted on:

President-elect: Josephine "Jo" Glidewell  
Financial Officer: Diana Tiberia  
Program VP: Lilian Care  
Corresponding Secretary: Rebecca "Becky" French  
AAUW Funds Vice President: Helen Santire



### **Step 1: Nominations from the floor**

Since our Annual Meeting on March 18, 2023, will be both in-person and virtual, we have decided we will use the following nominating procedure: if you have someone you want to nominate, please secure their acceptance in advance and send the nominee's name and the position sought to Anne Amador President at either [anamador@earthlink.net](mailto:anamador@earthlink.net) or Anne Amador 1022 Chimney Rock Dr. Houston, TX 77056 by March 18th. She can also be contacted by phone at 713-240-8095. If any additional nominations are received, they will be announced at the March Annual Branch meeting.

### **Step 2: Voting**

- a. Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting.
- b. Elections shall be by ballot or electronic voting unless there is only one nominee for a given office, in which case the election may be by voice vote. Election shall be by majority vote.

Thanks to those who served on the Nominating Committee Mary Andersen, Laura Cahill, Suzanne Dalati and Mary Peterson.

***Poupette Farnell, Nominating Committee Chair***

## **MARCH 2023 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS**

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

### **Hiking Honeys**



Enriching life through discovery, education, and the conservation of plants and the natural environment. This is the mission of The Houston Botanic Garden which will be visited by Hiking Honeys on **Thursday, March 16** on a trek led by Barbara Cook.



Sims Bayou runs through and around the northern edge of the site, creating two distinct spaces, the Island, and the South Gardens, connected by a bayou bridge. The garden features 132 acres of horticultural displays, natural ecosystems, and walking trails. The site is further divided into several gardens and groves where we can engage all our senses such as seeing the diverse color and beauty of plants from around the world in the Global Collection Garden, smelling the aroma of the Pine Grove, and hearing the wildlife drawn to the natural ecosystems.

There is a \$12.50 admission fee.

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 One Botanic Lane (off of Park Place Blvd.) Houston TX 77017. Plan to arrive there by 9:45 a.m. Inside-the-loopers who wish to carpool may contact Millie Hast at 713-663-7003 or [milliehast@gmail.com](mailto:milliehast@gmail.com) to arrange a time and place to meet. Additional information will follow later by email.

Please contact Barbara Cook at 713-705-7832 or [chefbjcook@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chefbjcook@sbcglobal.net) if you plan to attend. Let her know at which location you plan to meet the group.

## Gourmet Groups – Classic and Nouveau Combined

Due to so many in the group traveling in March, we will postpone our March dinner until the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month and go out to eat at a restaurant. Details to follow. Please join us **Saturday, March 25, 2023** at Maison Pucha in the Heights. <https://www.maisonpucha.com/menus>

If you have questions, 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](mailto: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](mailto:sjorgeson@gmail.com). Days and time to be determined later by those joining the group.

## Book Groups

### Afternoon Contemporary Literature

**Wednesday, March 1, 1:00 p.m.** Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles at La Madeleine (back room) 1001 Westheimer Road. Coordinator, Cheryl Smith, 402-651-2445 [ccherylsmile@gmail.com](mailto:ccherylsmile@gmail.com), Co-Coordinator,

Linda Morgan, 281-989-6499, [amorgan352@sbcglobal.net](mailto:amorgan352@sbcglobal.net).

### Contemporary Readers

**Wednesday, March 1, 1:00 p.m.** Fresh Water for Flowers by Valerie Perrin. The group will meet at

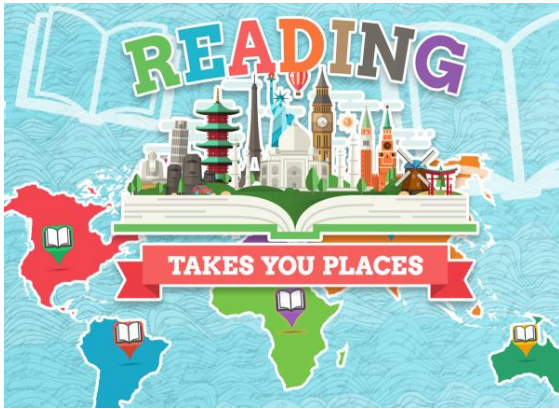
MDUMC West Campus, 13186 Memorial Drive, Room 462. For more information, contact Coordinator, Sharon Pope (713-376-0940), or Co-Coordinator, Cathy Urquhart (832-454-5017).

### **Enjoying History Book Club**

**Monday, March 13 at 1:30 p.m.** We will discuss Jefferson's Daughters by Catherine Kerrison. We will meet by Zoom. Please email me with any questions. Nancy Guilloud, [nanguilloud@aol.com](mailto:nanguilloud@aol.com).

### **Evening Contemporary Literature**

**Monday, March 6, 5:00 p.m.** at Los Tios Restaurant. A Train to Moscow by Elena Gorokhova. Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085, [WCGLIDE@gmail.com](mailto:WCGLIDE@gmail.com).



### **Mystery Book Club**

**Tuesday, March 21, 1:30 p.m.**

Riptide by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child  
Leader: Nancy Guilloud, via Zoom  
Contacts: Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190, [armstrong.melba@comcast.net](mailto:armstrong.melba@comcast.net) and Pat Pease [popeace@aol.com](mailto:popeace@aol.com).

### **Outstanding Literature**

**Tuesday, March 14, at 9:30 a.m.** We will have an excellent breakfast and a discussion of My Antonia by Willa Cather, led by Miriam Vyles. 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](mailto:lseighrap@aol.com), 281-596-0161.

### **Zoom Eclectic Book Group**

**Thursday, March 23 at 2:30 p.m.**

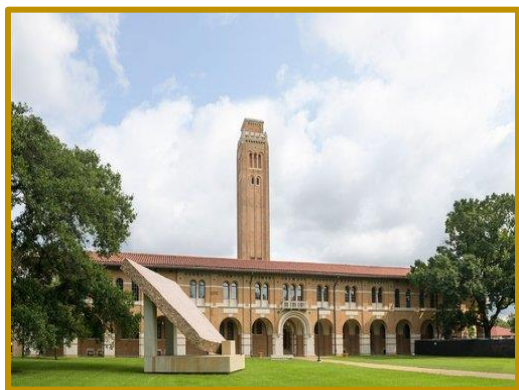
Slouching Towards Bethlehem by Joan Didion  
Discussion Leader – Nancy Ennis  
The Zoom Eclectic Book Group meets by Zoom. We welcome all members and guests. You may come for just one book or the entire year. Please email Carolyn Morris at [morriscarolyn16@gmail.com](mailto:morriscarolyn16@gmail.com) for the Zoom invitation. Join us for the lively conversation and friendly faces.



[14-signs-you-were-born-to-be-a-reader](#)

## Culture Group

### Rice University Architectural Tour – Wednesday, March 15



Led by one of AAUW-WHC's favorite tour presenters, Jim Parsons with Preservation Houston, this Cultural Activities event is sure to be popular. We all know Houston's Rice University is beautiful, but to experience it with an expert guide is a wonderful opportunity. Opened in 1912, this private bastion of higher education is a Houston gem. 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. Our 90-minute 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."

Following the tour, we will enjoy lunch at Cleburne Cafeteria on Bissonnet. Cost of the tour is \$15.00. Lunch is on your own. To reserve your spot, checks 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 **9:30a.m.** Don't forget your \$1.00 for the driver. Those wishing to meet the group at Rice can notify Kathryn at [kdmotard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kdmotard@sbcglobal.net) or text 713 503-7885. Please note that **Rice University parking will set you back \$12.**

### Save the Date – Culture Interest Group headed to Aggie Land – April 12

You are invited to join us on Wednesday, April 12 to visit the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum on the Texas A & M Campus. The facility includes a section of the Berlin Wall, replicas of Bush's Oval Office and Camp David Office and an area dedicated to First Lady Barbara Bush. The tranquil gravesites are within walking distance.

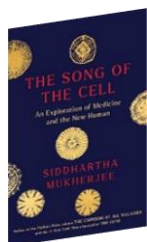


Cost is \$7.00 per person. Lunch is on your own at a nearby restaurant. Please send your check to reserve your spot to: Marie Helmy15522 Laurel Heights Dr, Houston, TX 77084

After lunch, Jane Wood will give a tour of the Texas A&M Traditions Plaza and Bonfire Memorial.

The bus will leave promptly at **9:30 a.m.** from the usual parking spot across from Memorial City Mall. Expected return is 4:30 p.m.

### WISE - Women Interested in STEM Education



Our group does not meet in March, but we look forward to seeing you for the review of the book 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.** at Rose Ennis' townhouse. Look for an update in the April newsletter.

*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 **from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.** via Zoom **March 2, 2023**, to discuss “China and the U.S.,” and on **March 16, 2023**, to discuss “Economic Warfare and U.S. Policy.” If interested in further information and details, please contact group coordinator, Martha Ewell, 713-782-2084.

## Inside the Loop Group

The First Tuesday afternoon group will meet on **March 7 at 3:00 p.m.** via ZOOM. The topic will be “Energy Security”. On **March 21**, the topic will be “War Crimes: What Are They? How Can They Be Prosecuted?”. All members are invited. For further information please contact Coordinator, Pat Thomsen at 713-302-8899 or Linda Marlin at 713-465-9466.



## The Wednesday Evening Group



The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday evening group will meet from **7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on March 8, 2003**, to discuss “War Crimes: what are they? How can they be prosecuted?” and on **March 22, 2023**, to discuss “China and America: back to the future?” via Zoom. For more information, contact Coordinator, Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 at 281-497-3626 or [willetten@gmail.com](mailto:willetten@gmail.com).

## Byway Birders – Brazos Bend State Park



**Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**, Byway Birders will visit J.J. Mayes Trace. We will meet at **9:00 a.m.** in the parking lot at the north end of J.J. Mayes trace. It is on the southside of I-10 between Old and Lost Rivers and The Trinity River. Between the rivers there is only one exit on the south side of I-10 and if you go past it you will need to go over the Trinity River Bridge, make a U-turn and try again requiring about 2 miles of driving to take the only exit.

Time and interest permitting birding areas will be (1) the rookery on the east side of the Trinity River (2) Champion Lake that is now part of the Trinity NWR and west of Trinity River (3) the road to the Corps of Engineers field office, and (4) Lake Charlotte on the east side of the Trinity. We will have lunch at Floyd's restaurant. This is a marshy area so long sleeves and mosquito repellent will be helpful.

Betty Cartmell and Harry Elliot are leading this trip. Please let Betty know if you plan on meeting them. 281-686-8651 or [drbettyc@earthlink.net](mailto:drbettyc@earthlink.net).



## Garden Divas

The recent freeze interfered with the Garden Diva's scheduled trip to Atkinson Farms. We are hoping

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to reschedule in May. We will be visiting the newly renovated Houston Farmers Market on **Tuesday, March 7.**

It all began in 1937 when a group of Houston area farmers was frustrated with the selling conditions at local farmers markets. Outperformed by “speculators” (non-farming produce vendors), a group of Houston area farmers organized and created the Farmers Protective Association, the predecessor to the Farmers Co-

operative Market Co-Association (FCMA). In 1942, the 9 members organized and formed the FCMA, and with the aid of many other local farmers, purchased the original 9.5 acres of land to build and operate their own market on: The Houston Farmers Market. For the next 80 years, nearly 9 more acres were acquired, buildings were erected as demand for space increased, and the FCMA was reorganized into a business corporation - the Farmers Marketing Association of Houston, Texas (FMA).

In 2017, MLB Capital Partners purchased the Houston Farmers Market from the FMA, and began plans to redevelop the site into a destination restaurant and retail space, while honoring the roots of the Market’s long-standing merchants and history. Many trials were faced during the redevelopment, such as flooding from Hurricane Harvey, and COVID-19, among others. Fast forward to 2021, construction on the revitalized Houston Farmers Market is now complete and the new facilities are open for operations.

MLB Capital Partners is transforming the 18-acre Market into a destination retail and dining experience offering more diversified products, renovated facilities, and full service and fast-casual dining. The Houston Farmers Market will host a wide array of Tenants that will reflect the uniqueness and diversity of Houston. More than your typical farmers market, find everything from your weekly produce to chef-driven meals and retail shopping at the Houston Farmers Market.



CASH is strongly suggested if you plan to purchase produce from the vendors at the market. We will eat at the recently opened restaurant – Underbelly Burgers. (On-site at the market).

We will meet to carpool from Lot B at Memorial City Mall at **9:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 7.** Please let me know whether you plan to attend and whether you are going to meet us there or carpool.

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

## Membership

Green is the color for March! That is, if you are Irish, or if you have hopes for the frozen plants in your garden to come back to life! It is also "green light" for inviting new members to join West Harris County Branch. Per a State Membership Zoom recently, new members that join after March 15, 2023, are good for the year until March 2024. So, let's go ladies! Bring a prospective member to one of WHC's many



AAU

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activity opportunities or to a Membership Meeting. As an organization that works to support women and girls' opportunities in the world, we need all the help we can get! Invite a neighbor, friend, or family member to become a West Harris County Branch member.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

*Thank You, Carolyn Stoffel, Membership, Vice President*



Toby Singhanian	Mar 03	Karen Welborn	Mar 15
Mary Andersen	Mar 04	Betsy Winn	Mar 15
Karen Harris	Mar 06	Kathryn Palmisano	Mar 16
Janice McNeil	Mar 07	Diane Treich	Mar 16
Cynthia Wier	Mar 07	Susan Thompson	Mar 17
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		

**Update to Directory**

**New Email:** Carolyn Stoffel - [craestoffel@gmail.com](mailto:craestoffel@gmail.com)

**Address Correction:** Maria Straus – 13310 Westport Drive