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Items for March Newsletter

DUE February 21, 2024

shirlenejustice@gmail.com

February Membership Meeting

featuring

Julia London

Author



Surviving Twenty-five Years in the Badlands of the Publishing Industry While Looking Fabulous

When: Wednesday, February 14, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Balcones Country Club, [8600 Balcones Club Dr.](#)

Cost: \$35.00

Contact: Shirlene Justice, shirlenejustice@gmail.com

Julia London is the *New York Times* and *USA Today* best-selling author of more than sixty-five romantic fiction and women's fiction novels. She is the author of the popular historical series, *A Royal Match*, as well as *You Lucky Dog* and *It Started with a Dog* romantic comedies. *Nice Work, Nora November* will be available June 4.

She lives in Austin with a couple of teens, an adorable dog, and a dog, and a mediocre attitude.

Lunch will be herb-roasted pork loin with rice pilaf, salad, and dessert. Vegetarian options are available. If you are only having beverages (\$10) and will not be staying for lunch, please let us know in the evite.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear all y'all,

February brings thoughts of love and connection. We are so fortunate to be a part of an organization that truly cares about one another and provides support in times of need. Personally, I have treasured the friendships gained and care and concern of AAUW members as I have faced the challenges of adult caregiving.

Please reach out to your AAUW friends to see if anyone needs a visit or a kind word or other support.

Our dear Kay Goodwin remembered AAUW at the national and local level in her will. The funds she has donated to our branch will be added to our University of Texas Fellowship to allow this fund to grow and continue to provide valuable fellowships to UT doctoral students who are completing their dissertations. We thank and honor Kay for this contribution.

Members have recommended several excellent ideas for a new branch project to celebrate 100 years of service. The Branch Project Committee will be meeting this month to consider how we want to impact our community as a branch. Our interest groups are already pursuing ways to serve the community. We hope to hear from several groups at our February meeting.

Thanks to each of you for who you are and how you serve our community in your own unique way. I am honored to serve by your side.

In sisterhood,

Linda Welsh, Ph.D., Co-President 2023-24

AAUW Austin: 100 Years Strong



Celebrate Black History Month

Black History Month Film Series at the Austin Public Library, Hampton Branch

Thursday Evenings in February, 5:30 p.m.

Celebrate Black History Month with a film series highlighting the Black experience and Black excellence at the Hampton Branch at Oak Hill Library! Join us most Thursday evenings in February to screen and discuss a recent film. Films will be: *Wakanda Forever* (February 8), *Selma* (February 15), *The Woman King* (February 22), and *Harriet* (February 29). Light snacks and refreshments will be provided.

Join us for a movie screening. Watch and discover new films at the Austin Public Library.

Mid-Year Strategic Update

This year we are focusing on three major areas: Celebrating our 100th year; implementing a branch-wide project and setting the stage for the next 100 years.

- What a fabulous celebration of our 100 years of accomplishments! We reconnected with our many partners and were honored with letters of praise and many proclamations from our elected officials. Kudos to Pam Wolfe and her team for their great work.
- Members have offered some great ideas for a branch-wide project. The Branch Project Committee will meet in the coming months to decide on a project. Look for updates in coming newsletters. If you want to be involved in this stage of the process, please contact Linda Welsh (lawelsh@gmail.com) to join the group.
- As we set the stage for the next 100 years, we seek to recruit and engage more members to speak out for AAUW's priorities of removing bias from education, fair pay and economic equity, and advancing women in leadership. Each of you has a role as we share our mission and advocate for these issues.

Increasing visibility and building partnerships will help us achieve our goals. Consider your many networks and connections with other organizations. What groups align with our mission that you can connect to our work? Each of us has a unique set of relationships that we can build upon on to empower women and girls in our community. Contact a board member if you know of a partnership we should pursue in the coming months to further our mission. Thanks to each of you for your support!

New Member Profile

Submitted by Ruth Subramanian

Cynthia Roberts

Cynthia Roberts is new to AAUW. Cynthia visited a few meetings with her friend Carol Algren and found the speakers interesting. As a result, she decided to join.

Cynthia earned her BBA from UT Austin with a focus on Accounting in May 1981.

Cynthia worked ten years in public accounting in audit, tax, and consulting services. She also served ten years as controller for several small firms in Austin. Serving twenty-one years at UT Austin Accounting and Tax, Cynthia specialized in team management, providing independent contractor payments with related employment analysis, scholarship payments for US and international students, international speakers and treaty applications, filing all types of US 1099 forms, international 1042S tax forms, and 945 tax forms; and preparing unrelated business Income tax analysis for other UT departments. She also did training for departments in State of Texas regarding travel rules and reimbursements of employee and non-employee travel expenses, training for departments in non-resident foreign student and independent contractor tax issues. She retired in August 2023.

Cynthia is married and her husband is also retired. They have no children. Her sister, brother, and their families live in Mississippi, along with her father.

Policy Update from the Public Policy Committee

Submitted by Policy Chair, Anita Knight

Former Public Policy Chair Mary Ellen Scribner continues to inspire and inform us. Thanks to her for helping compile the current issues. Now that our Texas Legislature is on “interim” between sessions, we cannot rest from efforts to understand and follow politics that are relevant to the mission of AAUW. As a founding partner of the [ERA Coalition’s National Strategy Task Force](#), AAUW will continue to call on Congress and the Administration to affirm the Equal Rights Amendment. Together, with your membership, support, and continued advocacy, we can advance policies that continue to break down educational and economic barriers for women.

Did anyone participate in the **Bigger Than Roe – Women’s March** on January 20, 2024? Abortion is an issue around the country, influencing legislation, caucuses and primaries. You can be part of the conversation on February 11, 2-4:00 PM. If you are not close to College Station, you can dial in via this LINK: <https://texasimpact.org/event/changing-the-conversation-the-theology-of-reproductive-justice/>



Rebecca Todd Peters is a feminist and Christian social ethicist who serves as a professor of Religious Studies at Elon University. Peters' scholarship focuses on questions related to economics, the environmental crisis, globalization, poverty and women's access to reproductive health care.

In the field of EDUCATION, there are continuing efforts to OPPOSE:

1. Chaplains in Public Schools - TFN (Texas Freedom Network)

Per SB763, public school districts are required to vote between September 1, 2023, and March 1, 2024, on whether they will allow unregulated chaplains to provide services to students. Whether you are a parent, current or retired educator, or community member, you can advocate in your community and help prevent this. Our toolkit has background information, talking points, tips for testifying at your school board meeting, and more. Not all the 1200 school boards in TX have yet voted. [Download the Chaplain Law Toolkit](#)

2. Bans on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – more in Austin [Chronicle](#)

As the last legislative session's fruits take effect this January, public universities are being forced to slash efforts to increase diversity. Sen. Brandon Creighton's Senate Bill 17, which bans diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs, passed along party lines with Republican supporters arguing that such programs are "exclusive" and have been "weaponized to compel speech instead of protecting free speech," according to Creighton. "There is no logic in the belief that you increase diversity by removing the policies and offices that work to promote it," said Sen. Borris Miles, D-Houston, upon SB 17's passing. The ban blocks public institutions of higher education from having any office promoting policies or procedures or influencing hiring or employment practices "with respect to race, sex, color, or ethnicity." (Even UT OLLI had to change name of the "Diversity Committee" to OLLI Community Outreach Committee.)

And we can SUPPORT:

1. CLIMATE ACTION:

Tell U.S. Congress to Advance Climate Policies – per Church and Society of the United Methodist Church. Specifically, we urge Congress to advance climate justice by:

- Funding the United States' fair share of contributions to international efforts that support climate vulnerable countries;
- Opposing riders that would weaken or defund provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act or the ability of federal agencies to carry out climate initiatives; and
- Prioritizing a just transition to a cleaner, healthier energy economy including funding for the Environmental Protection Agency to advance environmental justice and protect human health.

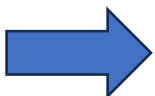
To express your views to the U.S. Congress, you may access a simple on-line form prepared by the Church and Society of the United Methodist Church. You may access the online form [HERE](#).

2. ELECTION INTEGRITY AND VOTING:

2024 Voting Information from Travis County Clerk via Mary Ellen - Deadlines for March Primary:

| Tuesday, March 5, 2024 – Joint Primary Election | |
|---|----------------------------|
| First Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail | Monday, January 1, 2024* |
| Last Day to Register to Vote | Monday, February 5, 2024 |
| First Day of Early Voting in Person | Tuesday, February 20, 2024 |
| Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail (received, not postmarked) | Friday, February 23, 2024 |
| Last Day of Early Voting in Person | Friday, March 1, 2024 |

Jackie Hardee reports that The League is having some voter registration events at a couple of Alamo Drafthouse locations. Let's see if we can partner up with the League and get more people registered to vote. See [League of Women Voters](#). Consider becoming a VDR (Volunteer Deputy Registrar) yourself – [Become a VDR](#).



See article (on page 8) about the upcoming film *Shaking it Up: The Life & Times of Liz Carpenter*. The film is designed to inspire viewers, especially the next generation of changemakers, to continue to shake things up in the ongoing battle for equal rights and human progress.

Named Gift and State Outstanding Members

It's time to send in your nominations to honor members for their contributions to the Branch and to AAUW.

Named Gifts

Each year, members of the Austin Branch are selected to be honored as recipients of "Named Gifts." We think of our colleagues who have, for example:

- Held a position for the branch and completed duties in an exceptional manner,
- Led a project,
- Served over time in multiple roles,
- Represented the branch to other groups in an outstanding manner, or
- Always said, "Yes."

At this location you may copy a [Nomination Form](#). If you prefer, it is fine to make nominations by explaining your support of the nominee without using the form. Please send submissions by **April 1, 2024** to Larayne Dallas, at ldallas@austin.utexas.edu or by mail at 8118 Cardin Drive; Austin, TX 78759-8737.

State Awards

Since it is a state conference year, our branch will make a nomination for both the AAUW Texas State Outstanding Member and for the AAUW Texas State Outstanding New Member.

For the Texas Outstanding Member Award, we are asked to nominate an "exceptional member that dedicates herself to ensuring that branch activities are successful." Additionally, someone who is "generous with her time and willing to help out wherever necessary."

For the Texas Outstanding New Member, the instruction is to identify the "special member who has been with your branch for three years or less and has jumped right in to participate and make her mark."

The submission deadline is February 15, so please send your nomination as soon as possible to Larayne at ldallas@austin.utexas.edu. The submission to State is to be a "narrative of 1,000 words or less, describing the accomplishments of the nominee". The committee urges you to nominate someone from our branch who is worthy of this recognition.

From the Name Gifts Committee:

Larayne Dallas, Berta Lloyd, Beverly Locklin, Elaine Penn, and Joyce Pulich

Branch Fundrai\$ing Update

See's Candy Bar Sale

Delicious See's candy bars are available for purchase now. This is perfect timing for Valentine's, Easter, or just because. The fundraising team hopes that all members will purchase some of these treats while supporting AAUW national goals. The price for milk chocolate and dark chocolate bars is \$3 for one or \$10 for four. Members who order \$30 worth – 12 bars – can have them delivered to their homes. Place your order with Joyce Pulich at joycepulich@sbcglobal.net or Susie Angel at susierangel@aol.com.



Kendra Gives Back Event – Save the Date!

The branch is sponsoring a Gives Back event at the Kendra Scott store in the Domain. The event in the store will be on May 1 from 12-2 pm with a 48-hour online event. This is a good time to purchase gifts for Mother's Day or graduation or to treat yourself. The store will donate 20% of all member purchases back to the branch so we can make a donation to the national AAUW Greatest Needs Fund.



Change for Change

The **Change for Change Challenge** continues to be successful and helps to underwrite branch meeting lunch costs for members who need financial assistance. Be sure to bring your bag or jar of change to the next branch meeting.



Death Announcement of Dorothy Ramsey

Dorothy Ramsey, a member since 1992, died on Monday, January 15 at the age of 90 after a long illness. Dorothy was a long-time participant in the bridge group and it was noted by **Joyce Pulich** that she was a "very good" player. Dorothy was a second-grade teacher for a few years at Joslin Elementary School and a long time P.E. teacher at Joslin. Dorothy loved to bowl, play bridge, ski both on water and snow, and walk her dog.

Her family will announce her memorial service as soon as it's known.

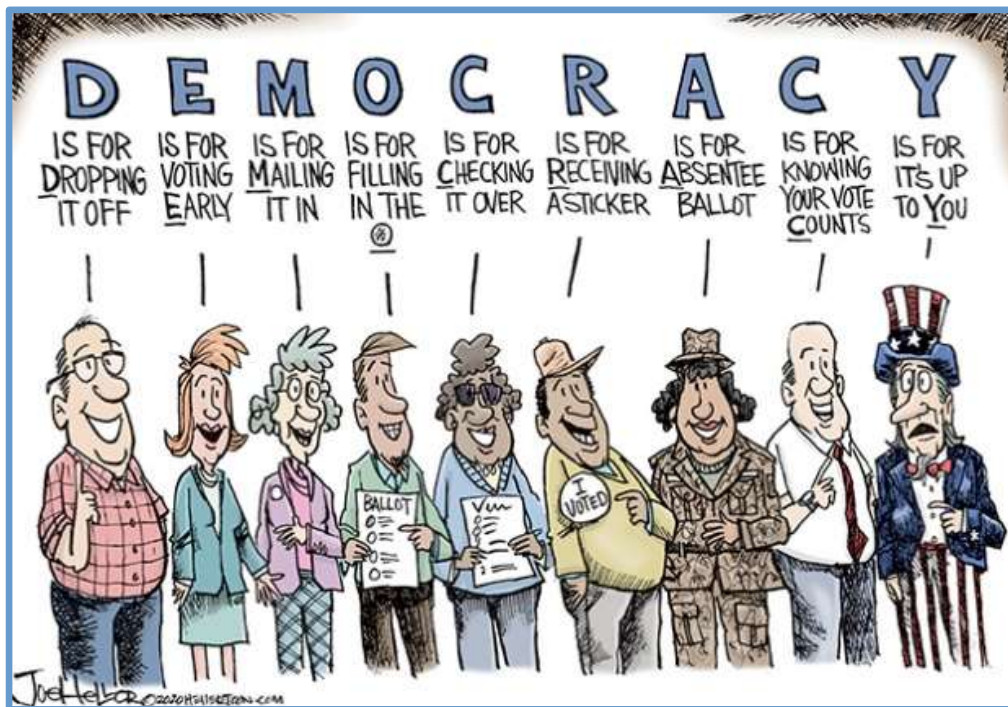
Shaking It Up: The Life and Times of Liz Carpenter

Branch member Linda Young, who was a friend and fellow political activist of the late Liz Carpenter, wants us to know that a documentary of Liz Carpenter's life and political influence will have its "world premiere" during the SXSW film festival. The exact date and venue have not yet been announced. This is a publicly supported effort and there are still opportunities for individuals to donate to the production. Here is a link to the announcement that describes all the documentaries and feature films that will be premiered at this year's festival, [SXSW Film List](#). When you open the link, click on the link for "Documentary Spotlight," not "Documentary Competition."

***Shaking it Up: The Life and Times of Liz Carpenter* is the story of a trailblazing journalist, White House official, feminist leader, political activist, and humorist whose legacy is a vital part of Texas and US history and highly relevant today. (World Premiere)**



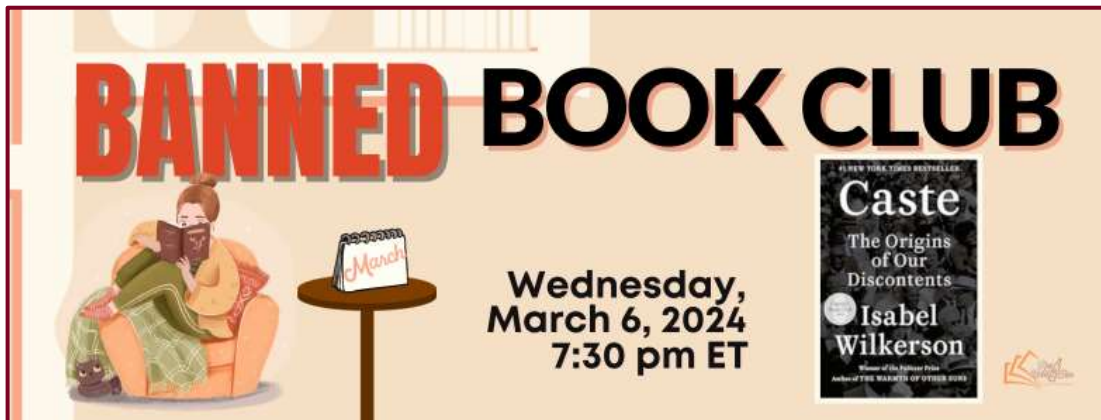
Here's a link that takes smaller donors to the Austin Community Foundation's designated fund for the Liz Carpenter Documentary. All donations are tax-deductible. The Liz Carpenter Documentary Film Fund provides financial support necessary to bring ***Shaking it Up: The Life & Times of Liz Carpenter*** to completion for broadcast on public television stations in Texas and across the nation as well as streaming on PBS.org. To contribute and/or see a five-minute preview of the film, go to [Liz Carpenter Five Minute Preview and Donation Page](#).



Banned Book Club Invitation

Submitted by Mary Ellen Scribner

In January, the Banned Book Club of Red Wine & Blue held its bimonthly Zoom meeting at which *The Kite Runner*, a novel by Afghan-American author Khaled Hosseini, was discussed. An English teacher presented her way of teaching it and then there were three breakout sessions. The sessions I attended very lively and interesting, with points of view from different age groups, parts of the country, occupations, etc. The teacher, quite young herself, had expressed surprise at coming to the realization that her students weren't born at the time of the 9/11 incident and most knew very little or nothing about it. I was pleased to see Resa Dunn and Anita Knight (hope I didn't miss anyone else) in attendance. I am already looking forward to the next meeting in March at which *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson will be discussed.



"You are invited to the **virtual** March Banned Book Club as the group reads and explores *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. The book explores the pervasive influence of a caste system in societies, transcending factors like race and class. Wilkerson draws parallels between caste systems in America, India, and Nazi Germany, identifying eight pillars that underlie such systems. Through compelling stories, including those of Martin Luther King Jr., Satchel Paige, and others, she illustrates how caste affects people's lives daily. The book examines the historical connections between American racial systems and Nazi ideologies. Wilkerson also delves into the health and cultural implications of caste, ultimately suggesting ways for America to move beyond divisive human divisions towards a more hopeful shared humanity."

[**Sign Up Now!**](#)

February Interest Groups

Art Tours

Wednesday, February 28, 10:00 a.m.
Kalahari Convention Center, African Art,
3002 Kalahari Blvd, Round Rock
Planner: Pat Beal
Contacts: Pat Beal, patrbeal@gmail.com, 512-762-9924
and Nurit Yaskil, yaskil@aol.com, 858-775-3771

Bridge Group

Thursday, November 14 and 28, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Lamar Senior Activity Center, 2874 Shoal Crest Ave
Contact: Elaine Penn, epenn9915@gmail.com,
512-579-4545

Central Book Club

Monday, February 12, 10:30 a.m.
La Posada Restaurant, 6800 West Gate Blvd, #143
Book: *Soul of the Octopus* by Sy Montgomery
Facilitator: Berta Lloyd
Contact: Linda Quintanilla, quintalin@gmail.com,
713-202-8525

Contemporary Literature

Monday, February 5, 7:00 p.m.
Zoom
Book: *The Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of home and Changed the Way We Live* by Danielle Dreilinger
Leader: Dorothy Shelley
Contact: Mary Ellen Scribner
maryescribner@gmail.com, 512-698-5539

Creative Stitchery

Wednesday, February 21, 10:00 a.m.
Program: Demonstration of Primitive Rug Hooking
Home of Suellen Mills, 3304 Shady Valley Drive
Hostess: Suellen Mills
Contact: Beverly Locklin, bklocklin@outlook.com
[512-343-0782 \(h\)](tel:512-343-0782), [512-633-2902 \(c\)](tel:512-633-2902)

Culture and Cuisine

Thursday, February 8, 6:30 p.m.
Theme: Israel
Location: Home of Nurit Yaskil, 1811 Crooked Lane
Hosts: Pat Beal and Nurit Yaskil
Contact: Shirlene Justice, shirlenejustice@gmail.com,
512-507-1003

Friday Morning Book Review

Friday, February 2, 10:00 a.m.
Location: Hyde Park Church of Christ, 310 W 43rd St
Book: *Emily Austin of Texas 1795-1851*
by Light Townsend Cummins
Reviewer/Host: Elizabeth Newell
Contact: Judy Reinhart
jareinhart@att.net, 512-345-5936

Mystery Book Group

Tuesday, February 27, 11:00 a.m.
BJ Brewhouse, The Shops at Arbor Walk, 10515 MoPac
Theme: Edgar Award Author
Contact: Pam Wolfe, piwolfe@yahoo.com
512-388-5433 (h), 512-925-7865 (c)

Out-to-Lunch

Tuesday, February 20, 11:15 a.m.
DeSano Pizzeria Napoletana, 10114 8000 Burnet Road
Planner: Debbie Starr
Contact: Elaine Penn, epenn9915@gmail.com
512-970-5051

PEARS

Saturday, February 17, 5:00 p.m.
Location: Di Massi's Mediterranean Buffet, 701 E Stassney Lane, Unit B
Host: TBD
Contact: Milli Stecker: mstecker@austin.rr.com,
512-468-1088

Southwest Book Group

Monday, February 12, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Host: Sharon Babot, 370 Cattle Trail Drive, Dripping Springs (see evite for gate code)
Book: *A Perfumist of Paris*, by Alka Joshi
Facilitator: Debbie Shaffer
Contact: Debbie Starr, dbbstrr@gmail.com

Tasters

Sunday, February 18, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Theme: Bubbles
Host: Debbie Shaffer
Location: Home of Debbie Shaffer, 7800 Southwest Parkway #1811, Gate Code: 0413 Enter, 512 554-7468
Contact: Elaine Penn, epenn9915@gmail.com

Hiking Group

Hike 1

Thursday, February 1, 10:00 a.m.

Meditation Walk at Katherine Fleischet Park 2106

Klattenhoff Drive, Austin

Leader: Linda Welsh

Hike 2

Saturday, February 17, 10:00 a.m.

Location of Hike TBD

Leader: Sarah Averill

Contact: Roberta Coffin,

rwc@scriptacommunicates.com, 714-679-8697



January Hiking Group – Texas Capitol Mall

Seated: Jonsie Abernathy, Marian Barber

Standing: Joyce Pulich. Pat Beal. Leslie Curtin,
Janet Lawson, Nancy Ennis, Naomi Baker,
Shelley Bjorkman, Ruth Subramanian

February Hiking Group – Hamilton Pool Preserve



Nancy Andren and Sarah Averill



Lisa Sura and Ruth Subramanian by the Pedernales River



L to R: Cathy Werner, Leslie Curtin, Lisa Sura, Ruth Subramanian, Naomi Baker,
Nancy Andren, Linda Welsh, Sarah Averill, Laurie Altman

AAUW Georgetown Style Show

March 9, 2024

Berry Creek Country Club

10:30 am

Tickets- \$35.00 -Includes a salad luncheon,
dessert and beverages

Cash wine bar for your enjoyment

Featuring Mary Ann Patterson
with
Fashions on Sale at the Show



Silent Auction with Gently Used
Purses
and Other Fashion Accessories



Shopping and Bidding open at 10:00 a.m.

Contact **Brenda Schollin** to donate purses or “goodies” to fill the purses:
Jewelry, Scarves, Belts, Cosmetics, Books, etc.
512-731-6627

**All Proceeds go to AAUW Greatest Needs Fund
to support the administration of Grants and Fellowships**