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### Items for March Newsletter

**DUE February 15, 2023**

[shirlenejustice@gmail.com](mailto:shirlenejustice@gmail.com)

## February Membership Meeting

featuring

**Chris Kennedy**

CEO, Leadership Austin



**Topic:** Civic Engagement: Where do we find ourselves?  
**When:** Wednesday, February 8, 10:00 a.m.  
**Where:** Unity Church of Austin, [5501 West US Hwy 290](#)  
**Cost:** \$30.00  
**Contact:** Jackie Hardee, [jshtxtx@yahoo.com](mailto:jshtxtx@yahoo.com)

We have all continued to navigate through an ever-changing world in the last 36 months. Join Christopher Kennedy, former Board Chair of the Association of Leadership Programs, as he shares trends and planning strategies of some civic leadership programs in a post-pandemic world.

Christopher Kennedy is a community engager focusing on building the interpersonal and communication skills that forge successful working relationships with clients, consumers, boards, public-private partnerships, and community leaders. He is a small business owner and most recently the CEO of Leadership Austin. Before starting his businesses and working at Leadership Austin for eight years, he had a 22-year career at the Lower Colorado River Authority, responsible for managing all administrative functions that supported the public utility needs in the 58 county Central Texas service area. He serves on national boards at the Courageous Conversation Global Foundation® and the Association of Leadership Programs where he served as the 2021 Board Chair. In Greater Austin he serves on the advisory councils for the Austin Young Chamber, Austin Together, Young Women's Alliance of Austin, and the Junior League of Austin. He is also a member of Austin Area Research Organization (AARO) and is an avid, some call rabid, Texas Longhorn fan.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear all y'all,

With the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature well underway, our public policy team is actively engaged in tracking bills and submitting testimony at the Capitol. Check out the Public Policy Report to learn how to get involved. Our branch has been active as well as noted in the mid-year update given at the January meeting. [See page 3]



Much like a poem, a vision board can encapsulate so many ideas in a concise form. My vision board for 2023 asks "Y".

- Why isn't this the image of what it is to be a man?
- Why aren't we welcoming immigrants with open arms?
- Why are women's bodies under the control of mostly white men?
- Why is "apart from" instead of "a part of" the natural world considered in every decision?

Our January speaker, **Sharon Watkins** identified curiosity as one of **five qualities needed for success**. Grappling with hard questions with **curiosity**, **courage** to raise our voices and advocate solutions, **perseverance** and **resilience** against challenging odds, all the while maintaining our **sense of humor** are also essential to effective advocacy.

Let's raise our voices in 2023 and advocate for needed changes in our schools, communities, state, nation, and world!

In sisterhood,

Linda  
lawelsh@gmail.com



# AAUW Austin 2022-23 Progress towards Our Goals

## Membership Recruitment and Engagement

- Twelve new members have joined AAUW for the 2022-23 year thus far! Thanks to each of you for sharing our work with friends and colleagues and interested folks. Please continue to invite folks to our program events.
- Interest groups are beginning plans for service projects. The Southwest Book Club has already acted to support literacy by collecting books for Williams Elementary which serves a disadvantaged population and where their entire budget for new library books was eliminated this year. The Central Book Club is researching schools for a similar project.
- A Wine and Cheese recruitment and orientation night is in the works for the spring.

## Public Policy

- Sample Letters for the ERA were developed by **Jackie Hardee** and shared with the branch.
- Get out the vote efforts were promoted through the newsletter and through members becoming Volunteer Deputy Registrars to register new voters.
- Research has been done on what other states are doing related to pay equity. Pay equity bills introduced to the 88th Legislature are being tracked.
- Plans are in place to be a strong presence at the Texas Legislature. AAUW Texas has hired a lobbyist, **Kate Kuhlmann** of HillCo Partners.

## Visibility and Partnerships

- An AAUW business card template is available for member use.
- The State Strategic Plan for 2022-2024 is under review to support increased visibility.
- Since AAUW National no longer has promotional kits, the group is identifying a new approach to highlighting AAUW's resources for women and girls.

## Scholarships and Fellowships

- AAUW Women Fellowship Fund provided \$10,620 in funding for UT fellowships from 9/1/2021 to 8/31/2022.
- The Frances Malmberg Endowed Scholarship at ACC provided a total \$3,400 for the current Academic Year for two ACC students. See the January newsletter for thank you notes from the awardees.

## January Meeting Recap

**Sharon Watkins**, owner of Chez Zee restaurant was the speaker at the January program meeting. Sharon delighted the audience by talking about how her father, a football coach and high school principal, and her mother, also a teacher, affected her. She did not want to be a teacher but liked drama and acting and was a very creative young person.

She received training at Princeton University in theatre arts and was invited to establish and direct the Creative Theatre Unlimited while there. She returned to Texas and worked at Texas Commission on the Arts designing and directing programs. She then ventured into advertising and set up her own agency. Through some of her clients, she was introduced to the owners of the Chez Fred restaurant. Soon thereafter, she was put in charge of the restaurant while the owners did other things. She shared with us the story of how she came to own the restaurant after the previous owners left and filed for bankruptcy.

Besides her busy schedule running Chez Zee, Sharon has been involved in many nonprofits and community organizations for over thirty years. She is also a lifetime member of the Fine Arts Council at the University of Texas in Austin.

## WOMEN'S MARCH

The "**Bigger than Roe**" Austin Organizers are moving the date for the Austin event to mid-February. The new date you are seeing is tentative and may be updated. Our voices and our physical presence will have the maximum impact when the legislators are in the building. The Plan: Texas legislative committees will be formed in early February. Organizers will specifically monitor the Healthcare Committee to see which bills the committee will be hearing. The focus will be on bills that attack our choices for body autonomy. Then we will meet at the Texas Capitol South Steps with our signs. This will be a picketing. Please bring signs, plenty of water, and snacks. Make sure to dress appropriately for the weather, wear comfortable clothing, and comfortable shoes.

**Saturday, February 11, 12:00 -2:00 p.m.**

**Texas State Capital**

**1100 Congress Avenue**

**Austin, Texas**

Please do check the event website before the event, just in case any last-minute details have changed. You can check it [HERE](#).

# Policy Update from the Public Policy Committee

Submitted by Policy Chair, Mary Ellen Scribner



In January the Texas Legislative seems to hum with movement and activity, but most of what you see happening on the floors of the House and the Senate is for show—photo ops with family, friends, colleagues, the media. Behind that scene, however, some very important business is actually getting done: bills are being filed, committee assignments are being made, and those bills are being

assigned to those committees. Soon there will be committee hearings, full House or Senate hearings, debates, fiery speeches plus lots of droning, but it's time for us to get to work. The public policy committee has been getting ready for this moment for months now, and it was great to have so many other branch members at the January program sign on to help us track bills, lobby for or against bills as needed, appeal to and encourage sympathetic legislators, and to persuade our families, friends, and perfect strangers whenever possible to work for just laws that serve our incredibly diverse Texas population. Our association's state public policy committee has selected five major issues to follow closely: **Women's Healthcare** (especially post-natal access with reintroduction of the former Medicare extension bill); **Open & Fair Elections**; **Reduction in Gun Violence**; **Education-related Issues** (such as libraries and book censorship, CRT, teachers' retirement COLA, vouchers, curriculum, and public-school accountability); and **Pay Equity** on the state level. It appears from the brief survey on our January signup sheet that local members are especially interested in LGBTQIA+ issues, gun safety, and all education-related issues.

If not already acquainted with Texas Legislature Online (<https://capitol.texas.gov>), spend a few minutes discovering just how much and what you can do on this website. It is your primary tool for tracking bills through the entire legislative process. The question of how do I find the numbers for bills I want to track has been asked. The Statesman and some other Texas media offer useful coverage including bill numbers, and you can use the TLO website above to get the numbers of bills introduced by your own and other sympathetic legislators. There is also a link on the site that lists the bills that are introduced each day. Get on the action notice lists of organizations that focus on the issues that matter most to you. Texas Freedom Network (<https://tfn.org>) is superb for LGBTQIA+, education including intellectual freedom, voting rights issues, and more. Try Texas Gun Sense (<https://texasgunsense.salsalabs.org/signup0/index.html>) for gun safety bill numbers and other campaign ideas. You do not have to be a member to receive the action alerts from the League of Women Voters (<https://www.lwvtexas.org/#gsc.tab=0>), and their priorities strongly parallel those of AAUW. Send an email to [maryescribner@gmail.com](mailto:maryescribner@gmail.com) if you want to be added to our *ad hoc* email list for the duration of the legislative session.

I am not one for using the telephone, but it is a very effective way of expressing your support or opposition to a bill. I did not plagiarize these telephone tips (see page 13); I stole them directly from Joanne Richards, co-chair of Ranked Choice Voting for Texas! RCV is not an AAUW priority, but it is something I have followed for a long time, and Joanne's telephone instructions provide an excellent pattern to follow for any issue that concerns you. You may also access the telephone tips by clicking [Joanne Richard's Telephone Tips](#).

# Branch Fundrai\$ing Update

Delicious See's candy bars will be available for purchase in February and March at the branch meetings. This is perfect timing for Valentine's Day and Easter bunny treats. 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 \$5 for two. Members who order \$25 worth – 10 bars – can have them delivered to their homes. Place your order with **Joyce Pulich** at [joycepulich@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joycepulich@sbcglobal.net) or **Debbie Starr** at [dbbstarr@gmail.com](mailto:dbbstarr@gmail.com). The team is hoping to locate a venue where we can sell the candy bars and accept donations.



Thanks for continuing to fill those **Change for Change Challenge** jars and making contributions at the branch meeting. At the January meeting, **Pam Wolfe** collected \$136 from generous members making our total this fiscal year \$628. The funds are helping to reduce the current year branch budget deficit.

Thanks to members who volunteered to wrap gifts for tips and tell customers about AAUW at Book People on two Mondays in December. The talented gift wrappers – **Kate DiPronio, Elaine Penn, Cathy Werner, Anita Knight, Brenda Hahne, Debbie Shaffer, Suzie Angel** and **Sharon Babot** – made \$154 that was sent to National to support the Greatest Needs Fund. If you haven't shopped at Book People, check it out...not just for books.



## New Member Profiles

Submitted by Ruth Subramanian

### Diana Chapa

Diane Chapa grew up in San Antonio and moved to Austin after high school. She attended the University of Texas and graduated with a BS in Natural Science and Education. She taught middle school home economics and elementary school for a total of seven years. She also worked as a Supervisor at the State Farm regional office in the Administrative Aervices department. Most of her career was spent working for the City of Austin, Watershed Protection department as a program coordinator. Working with the City gave her a deep commitment to environmental protection and regulations to control pollution.

She's been married for forty-five years and has two adult children. Her daughter lives in Kyle and son lives in Tyler, Texas. Both keep her busy with activities and travel. Diane spends time with AAUW member **Elena Toneva** exploring central Texas restaurants and places of interest. Diane is currently retired and enjoys butterfly gardening, refurbishing used furniture, working out at the gym with other AAUW members, reading and dancing. She works the polls for Travis County and is active in local politics.

## Named Gifts Nominations are Open for 2023

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](#). And, you don't have to use the form; it is fine to make nominations by explaining your support of the nominee. Please send submissions by April 1, 2023 to **Larayne Dallas**, at [ldallas@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:ldallas@austin.utexas.edu) or by mail at 8118 Cardin Drive; Austin, TX 78759-8737.



## Featured Organization *Sisters Network, Inc*

Branch member Myrtle Bell is an active member of the Austin Chapter of Sisters Inc. (SNI) and is eager to share information about this outstanding organization. SNI is committed to increasing local and national attention to the devastating impact that breast cancer has in the African American community.

Breast cancer is an imperative health issue facing African American Women. Though Black women get breast cancer at a slightly lower incidence rate (3%) than white women, Black women are 42% more like to die of breast cancer than white women. That is an astounding number and indicative of a variety of factors, many reflecting racial disparities.

SNI was founded in 1994 by Karen Eubanks Jackson, a 29 year and four-time breast cancer survivor. Today SNI is the oldest, largest, and only national Black breast cancer survivorship organization in the United States. SNI is the leading voice in the fight against breast cancer in the Black community. The organization has over thirty survivor-run affiliate chapters nationwide.

If you would like to learn more about Sister Network Inc., you may visit their website at [Sisters Network](#) or contact **Myrtle Bell** at [mlwbell@aol.com](mailto:mlwbell@aol.com) to learn more about the work they are doing in Austin.

## Mainspring Schools Announces New Executive Director



Mainspring Schools is pleased to announce that **Colin Swanson** will serve as the next Executive Director of Mainspring Schools.

Colin has been part of the Mainspring community for nearly a decade, first as a parent and most recently on the leadership team as Managing Director. During the hiring process, the Board of Directors was drawn to Colin's unique combination of personal experiences and professional background.



Colin was a foster parent before adopting her son. Three of her foster children became Mainspring students. Like other Mainspring parents, Colin has navigated the social services and healthcare systems required to care for her family.

Professionally, she brings decades of financial management experience and was instrumental in solidifying Mainspring's processes and financial health. During her career, Colin has consulted with corporate and nonprofit organizations across the globe on financial data management, reporting and budget preparation.

In addition to her business acumen, Colin is an award-winning and published creative writer. She has been a professor and lecturer at numerous universities, including The University of Texas, Southwestern University, and Texas State University.

Colin has a B.A. from Smith College, an MFA from the University of Texas and an MBA from the College of William & Mary.

As a trusted resource for Mainspring children, families, team members and partners, Colin will provide a seamless transition from outgoing Executive Director Jason Gindele.

The Mainspring Board of Directors welcomes Colin and looks forward to her leadership of the eighty-one-year-old community institution.

## CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION LOGO CONTEST

Submitted by Pam Wolfe, Centennial Celebration Chair



As you probably know, we will be celebrating our Branch 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary/Centennial in November 2023. One thing we need is a logo for our promotion and celebration.

The committee has decided to hold a contest for the best logo!!! Do you have to be a great artist? No, just someone with imagination.

**What should the LOGO look like?** It can be a drawing, collection of words, photo, whatever. It can include topics like *Service, Education, Equity, Scholarships, Friendship, 100 Years, etc.* If you draw your submission, just take a photo of it and send it to Pam. No need to use software to create.

Please send your submission to **Pam Wolfe**, [piwolfe@yahoo.com](mailto:piwolfe@yahoo.com) no later than March 1, 2023. Your name will be in the event program.

# February Interest Groups

## Creative Arts

### Art Tours:

When: Wednesday, February 22, 10:00 a.m.  
What: [The Framers Gallery](#) – A Woman Owned Art Business  
Where: 610 South Main Street, Georgetown  
Planner: Berta Lloyd  
Contact: Sharon Babot, [sharonbabot@gmail.com](mailto:sharonbabot@gmail.com), (707) 373-1317  
Note: Eatery suggestions will be distributed the day of the tour.

### Creative Stitchery:

When: Wednesday, February 15, 10:00 a.m.  
Project: Stuffed Animals  
Location: Home of Jackie Hardee,  
1811 Running Brook Drive  
Host: Jackie Hardee  
Contact: Beverly Locklin, [bklocklin@outlook.com](mailto:bklocklin@outlook.com), (512) 633-2902



January Project – Tunesian Crochet

## Bridge Groups

### Group A:

When: Weekly Bridge on Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. to noon  
Location: Senior Activity Center, 29<sup>th</sup> and Lamar  
Contact: Elaine Penn, [epenn9915@gmail.com](mailto:epenn9915@gmail.com), (512) 579-4545

### Group B:

When: Second Wednesday, 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Varies  
Contact: Lynn Cooksey: [cooksey@austin.rr.com](mailto:cooksey@austin.rr.com), (512) 477-2774

### Group C:

When: Fourth Wednesday, 1:00 p.m.  
Location: Senior Activity Center, 29th and Lamar  
Contact: Sara Ezell: [slezell@aol.com](mailto:slezell@aol.com), (512) 633-6178

# **Book Clubs and Literary Exploration**

## **Central Book Club:**

When: Monday, February 13 10:30 a.m.  
Book: *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah  
Location: IHOP, 1101 South MoPac Expressway  
Facilitator: Berta Lloyd  
Contact: Linda Quintanilla, [quintalin@gmail.com](mailto:quintalin@gmail.com), (713) 202-8525

## **Contemporary Literature:**

When: Monday, February 6, 7:00 p.m.  
Book: *Forget the Alamo: The Rise and Fall of an American Myth*  
by Bryan Burrough, Chris Tomlinson, Jason Standford  
Location: Zoom  
Leader: Ruth Subramanian  
Contact: Mary Ellen Scribner, [maryescribner@gmail.com](mailto:maryescribner@gmail.com), (512) 698-5539

## **Friday Book Review:**

When: Friday, February 3, 10:00 a.m.  
Where: Church of Christ in Hyde Park, 310 West 43rd Street  
Book: *Trustee from the Toolroom* by Nevil Shute  
Reviewer: Beverly Locklin  
Host: Beverly Locklin  
Contact: Judy Reinhart, [jareinhart@att.net](mailto:jareinhart@att.net)

## **Mystery Book Club:**

When: Tuesday, February 28, 11:00 a.m.  
Location: BJ Brewhouse, The Shops at Arbor Walk, 10515 MoPac Expy.  
Theme: Cozy  
Contact: Pam Wolfe, [piwolfe@yahoo.com](mailto:piwolfe@yahoo.com), (512) 925-7865

## **Southwest Book Club:**

When: Monday, February 13, 10:30 a.m.  
Book: *Lessons from the Edge: A Memoir* by Marie Yovanovich  
Location: Home of Susie Angel, 220 Silver Charm Drive, Dripping Springs  
(gatecode provided in evite)  
Host: Susie Angel  
Facilitator: Brenda Hahne  
Contact: Debbie Starr, [dbbsttr@gmail.com](mailto:dbbsttr@gmail.com), (512) 771-4497

# Friends, Food and Conversation

## Culture and Cuisine:

When: Thursday, February 9, 6:30 p.m.  
Theme: Gullah Geechee People– The Low Country of South Carolina  
Location: Home of Shirlene Justice, 2408 Tom Miller Street  
Hosts: Myrtle Bell, Carol Fritz, and Shirlene Justice  
Contact: Shirlene Justice, [shirlenejustice@gmail.com](mailto:shirlenejustice@gmail.com), (512) 507-1003



## Out-to-Lunch:

When: Tuesday, February 21, 11:15 a.m.  
Location: The Grove, Lakeway, 3001 Ranch Rd 620 South  
Planner: Betty Schmidt  
Contact: Elaine Penn, [epenn9915@gmail.com](mailto:epenn9915@gmail.com), (512) 970-5051

## Pears:

Pears will not meet in February.

## Wine Tasters:

When: Sunday, February 19, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
Theme: *Wine Spectator's* Top Rated (and Affordable) Wines  
Location: Home of Cathy Werner, 2714 Grand Oaks Loop, Cedar Park  
Contact: Elaine Penn, [epenn9915@gmail.com](mailto:epenn9915@gmail.com), (512) 970-5051

# The Great Outdoors - Hiking Group

Contact: Roberta Coffin, [rwc@scriptacommunicates.com](mailto:rwc@scriptacommunicates.com), (714) 679-8697

## Hike #1

When: Thursday, February 16, 1:00 p.m.  
Location: Guided Tour by the Waterloo Greenway, 1401 Trinity Street  
Leader: Marion Martin

## Hike #2

When: Saturday, February 25, 10:30 a.m.  
Location: Canyon Lake Gorge, 16029 South Access Road, Canyon Lake TX  
Leader: Sarah Averill



Mayfield Park  
January 2023

# Other Enrichment Opportunities

## Austin Women's Federated Club Program Meeting

### February Meeting

Topic: Wine Tasting with Cheese and Chocolate Pairings  
Sommelier: Kristi Willis  
When: Friday, February 10, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
Where: The Mansion, 2312 San Gabriel St, Austin  
RSVP: Shirlene Justice, [shirlenejustice@gmail.com](mailto:shirlenejustice@gmail.com) before February 1.



## Georgetown Branch Program Meeting

### February Meeting

Topic: Women and Heart Health  
Speaker: Renee Douglas, National Heart Association  
When: Wednesday, February 15, 10:00 a.m.  
Where: Bear Creek Country Club in the Card Room, [30500 Berry Creek Drive](#)



## Austin Branch of The English-Speaking Union

### February Meeting

Topic: Irish Independence: A Decade of Centenaries  
Speaker: Robert Hull, Consul General of Ireland, Austin  
When: Tuesday, February 7  
6:30 p.m., Wine and Hospitality  
7:00 p.m., Dinner  
7:45 p.m., Speaker  
Where: Chateau Bellevue, 708 San Antonio Street, Austin  
Cost: \$50.00 per person for dinner, payable by credit card at [ESUUS.ORG/AUSTIN](http://ESUUS.ORG/AUSTIN)  
RSVP: Karen Pope, [karen\\_pope@mac.com](mailto:karen_pope@mac.com) before the Jan. 30th deadline.



# Yearbook Corrections

## Newly Joined Member

Diane Chapa  
9405 Morninghill Drive  
Austin, TX 78737  
[dianechapa55@gmail.com](mailto:dianechapa55@gmail.com)  
(512)913-0438  
See new member profile, page 6

## Address Update

Gayle Smith  
1205 Poplar Street  
Bedford, Texas 76021-5455

## Change of Email

Melinda Townsel  
[mtownsel2@gmail.com](mailto:mtownsel2@gmail.com)

Also, please review your contact information in the Yearbook and report any updates to Milli Stecker at [milli1251@gmail.com](mailto:milli1251@gmail.com).

## Joanne Richard's Telephone Tips

These tips are provided by Joanne Richards, the co-chair of Ranked Choice Voting for Texas!

If you call, you'll either get a real person or a voicemail. In either case deliver your script. Voicemails are listened to! The person you speak with will likely be a staff member. They may ask for your name, zip code and maybe your city of residence. If you leave a voicemail, include your name and zip code.

### Script

*My name is \_\_\_\_ and I am a constituent. Thanks for taking my call.*

*I want to express to [Sen. \_\_\_\_] / [Rep. \_\_\_\_] my support for ranked choice voting.*

If you want to say more, give a reason such as:

- "Ranked choice voting is a nonpartisan change that is being adopted in both red and blue jurisdictions around the U.S."
- "Ranked choice voting will save Texas money by eliminating runoff elections."
- "Ranked choice voting leads to more positive, issue-oriented campaigning rather than mudslinging."
- "I like multiple candidates who are running. Why must I choose only one of them?"