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Items for March Newsletter  
**DUE FEBRUARY 17, 2021**

## AAUW Austin Branch Meeting

When: Saturday, February 13 - 10:00 a.m.

Where: Zoom

Topic: "Graduate Education-  
Observations from the Tower"

Speaker: Elizabeth M. Korves



Elizabeth Korves is Fellowship Program Administrator in the Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin. We know her as the person who makes it possible to award AAUW Fellowships. Elizabeth holds a BA (Religious Studies) and BSW (Social Work) from UT-Austin and the MPS (Pastoral Studies) from Loyola Chicago. Aside from her degrees from UT, she has also been employed at UT for almost 30 years, holding positions at the Geology Library, the Astronomy Department and now the Graduate School.

Elizabeth will talk with us about her work and about her observations working with graduate students and in supporting their success.

Elizabeth works with Dean Marvin Hackert, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, to collect the applications for the AAUW Austin Branch Fellowships established to benefit female students at the University of Texas at Austin. While we fund the fellowships and select the recipients, Elizabeth is an important liaison with the students, helping them with eligibility and application questions, and making sure that they know about fellowship opportunities.

Elizabeth's responsibilities include keeping members of the university faculty and staff updated on fellowship matters, including regulations that effect recipients and their funding. She plans and holds orientation events and, separately, training sessions and celebrations. Elizabeth processes all the funding for UT Graduate School fellowships, award letters, in addition to being the primary contact person for students on fellowship funding.

As far as "Observations from the Tower"... of course, Elizabeth works at a university --- the proverbial "Ivory Tower" --- but she really does work in the Tower. The UT Graduate School and Elizabeth's office are in MAIN, known at UT as "the Tower".

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring Planning Reminder: Remember that, excepting our groups with outside meetings, the Board decision is that we will have web-based meetings. National and State AAUW leadership recently confirmed a policy of delaying in-person meetings.

Since the founding of AAUW in 1885, educational equity and educational opportunity have been priorities for AAUW members. I know that all of us are concerned to hear about the difficulties of virus-induced home learning, and about inequities based on geography and income.

I want to bring your attention to another virus impact on education. There has been a significant decrease in the number of high school graduates going straight to college in the 2020-2021 school year, with notable differences across socioeconomic groups. According to early figures (<http://nscresearchcenter.org/high-school-benchmarks/>), the number of 2020 high school graduates immediately going on to college decreased by 21.7% as compared with 2019. Additionally, the drop attributed to students from low-income schools was 29% and from high-poverty schools, 32%.

Some of these students may have decided to pursue non-college vocational training, but this option seems likely for only a small number of those who would have been expected to attend college. Will these “missing” young people apply for college in the fall of 2021 or soon after? How many of them will miss out on opportunities we expect that advanced education would give them?

I am reminded of a college friend whose family moved when she was in second grade and, consequently, who never learned to write cursive. (We used to think of this as a serious handicap.) She surely could have learned cursive but, after missing it in the regular educational schedule, she didn't make that extra effort.

That story is a closer analogy to the concerns I have for younger students in the virus-time but it also relates to those who missed starting college. I fear that it will be hard to go back to learn missed material and hard to get back on track for higher education.

I know that you are already thinking about this . . . as individuals and as an organization, we will be needed to support and advocate on behalf of those who are missing out. Thanks to those of you who are already helping family and friends. It is good to know that we have this group of like-minded individuals.

Thank you for your support of AAUW,

**Larayne Dallas**

Austin Branch Co-President



# January Meeting Recap

67 members and friends joined the January program “Women in Film” on ZOOM.

We started with a few poll questions. Here are the results of the poll:

- Our favorite movie genres were #1 drama, and #2 documentaries.
- Our favorite actress who has received more than one Academy Award is guess who? Meryl Streep.
- A few of us knew that Hattie McDonald was the first black actor to win an Academy Award for her supporting actress role in “Gone with the Wind”.
- And Kathryn Bigelow was the 4th woman nominated for best director.

Documentary films are the one genre where the number of female filmmakers is comparable to that of male directors. Nancy Schiesari, an experienced director, producer and cinematographer, shared this link about 25 Groundbreaking Female Directors: [Ground Breaking Female Directors List](#).

Both Professor Nancy and filmmaker Monique Walton will keep us posted about their upcoming projects. We will surely want to see Professor Nancy’s latest documentary “Citizens at Last, Texas Women Fight for the Vote” due out on KLRU this spring.

Here are a few other films recommended in CHAT by our audience.

[Summerland](#), written & directed by Jessica Swale

[The Professor and the Madman](#)

[A Hidden Life](#)

[The Handmaiden](#)

[Intersection](#)

[Ford vs Ferrari](#)

[Ma Rainey](#) starring Viola Davis

[Mrs. America](#), a historical drama TV miniseries

[Sylvie’s Love](#)



The recent award-winning film (at Cannes) on which Monique Walton collaborated with writer & director Annie Silverstein, “Bull” may be seen on Apple TV, Amazon Prime, and HULU. And the Statesman informed us that Austin Film Society is showing Sundance films via drive-in screenings later this month, and SXSW will be virtual.

Thanks to **Jean Bessent**, **Anita Knight**, **Janet Widoff** and **Mary Kate Fredriksen** for this program, which received several compliments. In addition, our speakers Nancy and Monique were pleased to take part and share their thoughts, and they appreciated our thoughtful questions.

# Interest Groups

## February

### Art Tour

No February Meeting – Cancelled due to COVID

### Bridge Groups

No February meetings

### Contemporary Literature

When: Monday February 1, 7:00 p.m.

Where: Zoom

Book: *Toward That Which is Beautiful*  
by Marian O'Shea Wernicke

Leader: Marian Wernicke

To RSVP: Mary Ellen Scribner, [maryescribner@gmail.com](mailto:maryescribner@gmail.com)

For a special invitation to Contemporary Literature to hear our very own Marian Wernicke discuss her book, please go to page 7.

### Central Book Club

When: Monday February 8, 10:30 a.m.

Where: Zoom

Book: *Five Presidents: My Extraordinary Journey with Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford*  
by Clint Hill and Lisa McCubbin

Facilitator: Barbara Fry

To RSVP: Mary Lou Bell, [maryloubell@gmail.com](mailto:maryloubell@gmail.com)

### Creative Stitchery

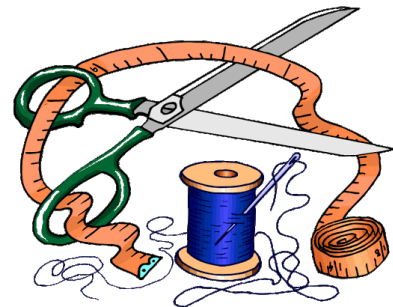
When: Wednesday, February 17, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Zoom

Project: Crocheting with Zosia

Hosts: Elaine Penn and Jackie Hardee

To RSVP: Beverly Locklin, [bklocklin@outlook.com](mailto:bklocklin@outlook.com)



### Culture & Cuisine

When: Thursday February 18, 6:30 p.m.

Where: Zoom

Theme and Cuisine: Black History Month

Host: Myrtle Bell

To RSVP: Shirlene Justice, [shirlenejustice@gmail.com](mailto:shirlenejustice@gmail.com)

You are invited to join Culture and Cuisine for Black History Month. See page 6 for details.



## First Friday Book Review

When: Friday February 5, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Hyde Park Church of Christ, 43rd and Avenue B.

Book: *Murder by the Book* by Clare Harmon

Reviewer: Evelyn Boyer

Online Host: Resa Dunn

To RSVP: Judy Reinhart, [jareinhart@att.net](mailto:jareinhart@att.net), 512-345-5936

## Hiking Group

### Hike 1

When: Sunday February 7, Time 11:00 a.m.

Where: University of Texas Urban Hike – Landmark Tour

Meeting Location: TBA

Leader: Linda Welsh

To RSVP: Linda Welsh, [lawelsh@gmail.com](mailto:lawelsh@gmail.com)

### Hike 2

When: Thursday February 18, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Nalle Bunny Run Wildlife Preserve, 4615 Bunny Run

Meeting Location: TBA

Leader: Roberta Coffin

To RSVP: Linda Welsh, [lawelsh@gmail.com](mailto:lawelsh@gmail.com)



## Mystery Book Club

When: Tuesday February 23, 11:00 a.m.

Where: Zoom

Topic: Period Mysteries (Edwardian, Victorian, Roman, etc.)

To RSVP: Pam Wolfe, [piwolfe@yahoo.com](mailto:piwolfe@yahoo.com)

## Pears

No February Meeting

## Southwest Book Club

When: Monday February 8, 10:30 a.m. - noon

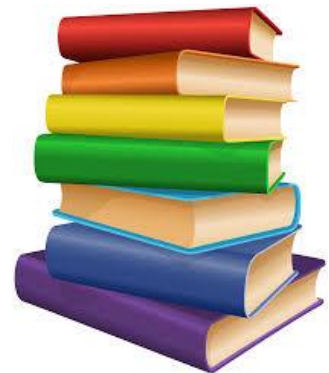
Where: Online via Zoom

Book: *The Equivalents: A Story of Art, Female Friendship and Liberation in the 1960s* by Maggie Doherty, 352 pages

Facilitator: Brenda Hahne

Online Host: Debbie Starr

To RSVP: Respond to emailed invitation and choose option to SAVE to calendar; this will save the zoom details.



## Wine Tasters

No December Meeting

## Celebrate Black History Month with Culture and Cuisine

The focus of February's Culture and Cuisine meeting will be Black History Month. **Myrtle Bell**, a longtime member of Culture and Cuisine, is preparing a list of Austin-area Black-owned restaurants to share with the group. She and her husband, Don plan to order food from as many as possible between now and the meeting so that Myrtle can give us a description, food review and information about take-out and delivery. Everyone will be able to order their own food plus support our community's Black-owned businesses.

Myrtle will also share with the group her experiences growing up in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Having recently visited Spartanburg with Don, Myrtle will enhance her stories with photos of the home where she grew up and the surrounding area.

Also joining our meeting will be **Dr. Rashaanne Lewis**, the president of the National Council of Negro Women Greater Austin. An AAUW member as well, Dr. Lewis will lead a brainstorming session on how each of us can meaningfully engage in the celebration of Black history. Additional information about NCNW is covered below.

If you are interested in attending Culture and Cuisine at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 18 please email Shirlene Justice at [shirlenejustice@gmail.com](mailto:shirlenejustice@gmail.com).

## Organization Making a Difference – NCNW Greater Austin

The NCNW Greater Austin is a chartered section of the National Council of Negro Women. The NCNW was founded in 1935 by [Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune](#), an influential educator and activist. The NCNW's mission is to lead, empower and advocate for women of African descent, their families and communities. The National Council of Negro Women is an "organization of organizations" that enlightens, inspires and connects more than two million women and men.

Today, NCNW's program goals are grounded on a foundation of critical concerns known as "Four for the Future". The goals are:

- Promote education with a special focus on science, technology, engineering and math.
- Encourage entrepreneurship, financial literacy and economic stability,
- Educate women about good health and HIV/AIDS.
- Promote civic engagement and advocates for sound public policy and social justice.

2021 Projects consist of: •Virtual Vision Board Extravaganzas, •Bi-monthly Book Club, •Weekly Prayer Line, •Weekly Mentoring & Coaching at Bertha Sadler Means Young Women's Leadership Academy, •Black History, •Virtual Observance Program, •Women's History Virtual Program, and •Membership Tea Virtual Program.

If you are interested in learning more about NCNW, please click [HERE](#).

You are also invited to attend the NCNW Greater Austin's February meeting.

**Topic:**      **Black History Month: What does it Mean to You and How Do You Celebrate Black History?**

**When:**      **Monday, February 9 at 6:00 pm**

**Where:**      **Zoom**

**To RSVP:** **Dr. Rashaanne Lewis, [ladypapillon200@outlook.com](mailto:ladypapillon200@outlook.com)**

## Austin Online Activities to Celebrate Black History Month

The entire month of February is dedicated to the awareness of African American History. There are several online events going on in Austin in celebration of Black History Month. Click on the mural to access the calendar of online events. (list compiled by [allevents.in](http://allevents.in))



Detail of the "Rhapsody" mural in East Austin by artist John Yancey. The mural features African-American musicians. (Spectrum News)

## Other Enrichment Opportunities

### Good Times with the Contemporary Literature Book Group

Despite the pandemic restrictions, the contemporary lit book group is enjoying a banner year of great reading, great company, and a couple of special treats this year. So far we have enjoyed books by Susan E. Rice, Ann Patchett, Melinda Gates, Elizabeth Strout, and M. R. O'Connor. The featured author at the February 1st meeting will be one of our own members as **Marian O'Shea Wernicke** assumes the role of a visiting author to talk about her recently published novel *Toward That Which Is Beautiful*. We invite all members of the branch to join us on Zoom at 7 p.m. on February 1st for that presentation. Email [maryescribner@gmail.com](mailto:maryescribner@gmail.com) if you would like to receive the Zoom link for the meeting.

For last month's discussion of Maura O'Connor's excellent (on many levels) *Wayfinding; The Science and Mystery of How Humans Navigate the World*, we were fortunate to have as a guest Meera Subramanian, daughter of dedicated book club member **Ruth Subramanian**. In 2016, both Maura and Meera were Knight Science Journalism Fellows at MIT. Maura was working on *Wayfinding*, and Meera was writing her own environmentally focused book, *A River Runs Again; India's Natural World in Crisis, from the Barren Cliffs of Rajasthan to the Farmlands of Karnataka* (available from the Austin Library and all the usual book purchase sources). Meera's acquaintance with Maura and her insights into their profession added so much to our discussion.

We have more great reading and discussing ahead through the spring for which you are welcome to join us. We can't promise that Timothy Egan, Sara E. Broom, Rebecca Solnit, or any of their acquaintances will show up, but all three authors have been spotted in Austin at one time or another!

## Other Enrichment Opportunities Continued

### Slavery and Human-Trafficking Prevention

What is human trafficking? Who does it affect? Why are healthy relationships important? These are just some of the questions being asked at the Bullock Museum's latest exhibit, "Not Alone: Working Together in the Fight Against Human Trafficking."

Opened on January 9 and running through May 30, the showcase itself is one that the museum's curator, Angie Glasker, believes is quite different from their typical temporary exhibits. "It's not very artifact heavy," she says. "The few artifacts we have mostly come from survivors who we interviewed."

For information about visiting this exhibit, to the Bullock Texas State History Museum website by clicking [HERE](#).

Regarding AAUW Austin advocacy efforts, you should have received an email from Anita Knight discussing strategies that we as AAUW Austin members can implement to help raise awareness about this issue. If you have questions about how to become more involved with this issue, you may contact Public Policy sub-committee chair Brooke Shannon at [brooke.shannon224@gmail.com](mailto:brooke.shannon224@gmail.com).

### AAUW Georgetown Branch Meeting

Topic: Self Care Workshop

Speaker: Lynn Hagan

When: Monday, February 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Where: Zoom

To RSVP: Terry Whaley [whaleyterry@gmail.com](mailto:whaleyterry@gmail.com)

Lynn Hagan, is on the state board of AAUW Texas where she oversees the Share Program. A native of Houston, she lives in rural Milam County with her husband and four cats.



## Named Gifts Nominations are Open

Austin Branch AAUW contributions to the national organization in 2020 totaled \$12,395 thanks to the work of the fund-raising team and the generosity of our members. That means it is possible for up to 24 members to be honorees for "Named Gifts." If you want to nominate members to be recognized and honored, a form is on the front page of the [branch website](#) and a link to the form is provided below.

Please email or snail mail the form no later than April 1 to Past President **Joyce Pulich** at [joycepulich@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joycepulich@sbcglobal.net) or 2300 Westway Circle Austin, TX 78704. If you have questions, contact Joyce at (512) 656-1776.

[Named Gifts Nomination Form](#)



STEM news from your STEM liaison and committee: **Nancy Andren, Liaison; Roberta Coffin, Anita Knight, Elizabeth Newell, Rosemary Morrow, Jackie Hardee, Lilac Bauer and Ginny Tannebring.**

### **Latinitas**

Club Latinitas second semester has begun online. This is their after-school program for girls ages 9-14. Their latest Code Chica program runs from January 16 through March 6 on Saturdays, virtually. This program is for girls in the 8-12<sup>th</sup> grades.

Latinitas is looking for high school age writers for their magazine.

### **Girlstart**

I heard from Sharlym Gill, volunteer coordinator for Girlstart, thanking us for helping to make the kits for the second semester of STEM at Home.

Girlstart has started providing their Starry Nights program online on Thursday nights.

### **Other STEM opportunities:**

The Texas Girl's Collaborative Project has new educator resources on their website:

<https://www.txgcp.org>.

The Association for Women In STEM at UT (AWIS at UT) is recruiting mentors for their 2021 mentorship program which pairs undergraduate students, grad students, and postdocs at UT with women in STEM careers for 1 year of meetups (starting Jan. 2021) scheduled at the pair's convenience and guided by supporting materials. A form is available at [https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_b9NPYRLozuJtirX](https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b9NPYRLozuJtirX) for those interested.

# In Memoriam—Lee Collins

November 21, 1942 – December 9, 2020

Austin Branch Member **Lee Collins** died on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Lee had been a member only a short time but had joined the Contemporary Books group and seemed ready to be an active part of the branch.



Lee was born in San Antonio and spent her last days in Austin but, in between, she lived and worked in places around the world, including Mexico, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Dubai. She was a teacher, a businessperson, and a student. After multiple degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, Lee completed a doctorate in economics in 2012 from the Newcastle School of Business in the United Kingdom.

Early in her career, Lee worked in computer programming for the Bank of America and taught fighter pilots in the Lackland Air Force Base Foreign Language School. Later, she was a wife and mother; worked as an executive at several tech companies; and again, was an educator.

Her obituary thanks her for, “giving so much of herself to her family and friends and encouraging them to pursue limitless possibilities.”

Prepared by Larayne Dallas based on the obituary posted here:

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/lee-collins-9940446>