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Items for the April Newsletter

DUE Wednesday,
March 19, 2025

shirlenejustice@gmail.com

March Membership Meeting

Featuring

Becky Bullard

Founder and CEO of Democrasexy

Creating Voter Activism For Women's Healthcare



When: Wednesday, March 12, 10:00 a.m.

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

Cost: \$35.00

Contact: Cathy Werner, cathy.werner3586@gmail.com

Becky Bullard is the founder and CEO of the creative civic engagement organization Democrasexy. The organization convenes purposeful communities such as [The Civic Mystics](#). Becky also produces content and events ([Y'allentines Day](#), [Texorcism](#), and [Tex Support](#)), which is for the purpose of demystifying Texas politics and infusing optimism into the work of advocating for women and queer folks. Her mission is to make democracy sexy, so that more people will do it.

Becky has served as an election judge, a precinct chair, and training co-chair of the Travis County Democratic party and now serves as vice-chair on the City of Austin's Commission for Women. She used to co-host The Rabble, a Texas politics podcast, and has emceed events for Supermajority, the Texas Civil Rights Project, MOVE Texas, the Texas Observer, and others. She was named one of the "Best Texans of 2024" by Progress Texas. A single mom living in Austin, her two daughters often tell people, "Our mom likes to wear sequins and help more people vote." Find her on social media: @democrasexy or at democrasexy.com.



Lunch will be King Ranch chicken with steamed broccoli or a vegetable plate with pecan pie for dessert. RSVP no later than March 4. The headcount for our event must be turned in to Balcones Country Club a week in advance. Cancellations or "no-shows" may still be asked to pay for their lunch.

Message from the President

March is National Women's History Month!

It started with the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women in 1978 to address the lack of women's history in the K-12 curriculum. As a result of their work, the week of March 8th (International Women's Day) was selected as Women's History Week in Sonoma County. The idea grew, and then...



- In February 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued a presidential proclamation declaring the Week of March 8th National Women's History Week.
- In 1981, Representative Barbara Mikulski and Senator Orrin Hatch co-sponsored a Congressional Resolution for National Women's History Week.
- In 1987, Congress declared the month of March as National Women's History Month in perpetuity.
- A special Presidential proclamation has been issued yearly to honor women's extraordinary achievements in the US.

Source: National Women's History Alliance <https://nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org/womens-history-month-history/>

In honor of National Women's History Month, the topic for the March branch meeting is women's activism, an issue that is of great interest to all of us. Please join us at the Balcones Country Club on Wednesday, March 12.

We are also continuing fund-raising efforts to endow the AAUW Austin Centennial Scholarship at Austin Community College. As of the end of January 2025, we have raised \$10,590.44 from 34 individual donors. Thanks to all who have donated. We are still short of our target of \$15,000, so please help us reach our goal. Information about donating is included later in the newsletter on page 8.

As we begin seeing bluebonnets along the side of the roads here in Central Texas, we know spring is around the corner. In our uncertain political climate, it's good to de-stress: enjoy the view, smell the flowers, and spend time with friends and family. After all, the connections we make bring joy to our lives. Remember that AAUW Austin Branch is all about connections – bringing like-minded women (and sometimes men) together to learn, connect, and put our heads, hands, and hearts together to help those women and girls who need a helping hand. As I was looking for quotes about giving, Google's AI found these, and they touched my heart:

"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver" - Maya Angelou

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." - Winston Churchill

"The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer." - Mahatma Gandhi

Happy National Women's History Month!

Policy Update from the Public Policy Committee

Submitted by Public Policy Chair Anita Knight

Are you following the state AND federal governmental activities: people, policies, protests?

Congressman Lloyd Doggett advises we **LITIGATE, LEGISLATE, and MOTIVATE!** to overcome the threat of Project 2025 and the extreme right wing.

1. Branch members received an email on February 17 with a CALL TO ACTION to oppose the “voucher”/ESA bill in Texas. That is a timely priority.
 - Other priorities are the abortion ban and Medicaid cuts.
 - There are more bills to track: censorship, child care, elections, gun violence, climate, and BUDGET



2. Texans don't have to agree on every abortion question to know that pregnant patients deserve the best care and doctors deserve respect. Texas legislators should fix Texas' abortion laws so they reflect our shared Texas values. If you have not already signed a postcard, "[It's Time to Fix the Texas Abortion Ban](#)," sign on here. TX Impact is managing a state-wide postcard campaign, and it hopes to present thousands of these postcards to our state representatives this spring.
3. Congressional decisions about Medicaid have enormous implications for Texas. Medicaid is a major health insurance provider for Texans, covering about half of all births in our state. In addition, changes to federal Medicaid formulas could rock our state budget, impacting other areas of state government.

Please take a minute to call your US representative and senators and urge them not to cut Medicaid. You can call them through the US Capitol Switchboard, and you don't even have to know who represents you (although I hope you do). Call 202-224-3121, give the operator your zip code, and they will connect you with your elected official's office.

4. Texas State Representative Brian Harrison has filed House Bill 2572, which would prevent taxpayer money from going to the American Library Association (ALA), which he claims has become "radicalized." Harrison also called the ALA "one of the most anti-parent, anti-Texas organizations."
5. Bills introduced by Republicans in the Texas Senate would require the Ten Commandments to be displayed in public schools and allow schools to carve out time for students to read the Bible. This is the latest effort by lawmakers in states to infuse religious doctrine in public education.

***Don't forget our AAUW Legislative Day, March 17, 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.
at the Capitol. The focus will be on public education.***

What is DEI?

We hear much about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) these days, and much of what we hear in the media is nonsense. Here are some DEI descriptors. Understanding what DEI is and isn't will help us have more thoughtful and persuasive conversations about the term's meaning and usefulness.



Some of What DEI Is

ramps and sidewalk curb cuts	various food options for vegetarians, vegans, kosher, gluten-free, etc. at medical facilities
subtitles & captions (TV & phone)	non-smoking areas/end of smoking indoors
family restrooms	being able to have medical professionals and your co-workers use your preferred name (just queer people have those)
changing tables in men's restrooms	wellness programs and incentives
breast feeding/pumping stations & accommodations	more relaxed & inclusive dress code policies
floating paid holidays	rooms to pray/meditate at work & other public places
pay equity & transparency	employee recognition programs
parental leave (time & pay)	employee/network resource groups
coming back to a job after birthing a child	large print materials
not having to just accept harassment	materials in different languages
work accommodations for a variety of disabilities	multiple religious options at hospitals
flexible work arrangements	accessible bikes and public transit accommodations
size inclusive chairs and beds in medical facilities	businesses not becoming fully cashless
belt extenders on planes	
covered mental/behavioral health resources	

Some of What DEI Is Not

hiring an underqualified person for a job just because they're a person of color
hiring based on race to meet diversity goals (this is illegal)
a new fad or buzzword. DEI work has been going on for many, many years, under different names

Advocacy - How to Share Your Story

Submitted by Mary Ellen Scribner

As the 89th session of the Texas Legislature gains momentum, we are all concerned about many issues being considered for new laws in our state. We want to make our voices heard, both pro and con, but are unsure how to do so. When people think of advocating for their ideas, they think of convincing arguments based on data, facts, and figures. However, studies show that if you share a story, people are often more likely to be persuaded. And when data and story are used together, audiences are moved both intellectually and emotionally. Your story and my story, combined with the stories of others, can be very persuasive. Once you have written your story, you can use it in various ways by modifying its format and length: in an email to a legislator, in a letter to the editor of a newspaper, and, very importantly, as written or live testimony to a committee hearing. Keep these professional storytelling tips in mind:

- Situate your story in the context of the larger issue.
- Keep your story tightly focused and avoid tangents.
- Tailor your story to your audience.
- Motivate your audience with hope.

WHY TELL YOUR STORY?

- Effective Advocacy: stories foster connection between people, help them understand an issue, and motivate people to become advocates.
- Individual Empowerment: storytelling recognizes and elevates your expertise as someone with direct experience with an issue.
- Influence Public Narratives: storytelling ensures that there is a diversity of voices in public debates. Stories can also combat negative rhetoric and stereotypes.
- “Stats Tell; Stories Sell”: Policymakers respond to a combination of data with a creative, human narrative that resonates with the wider public.

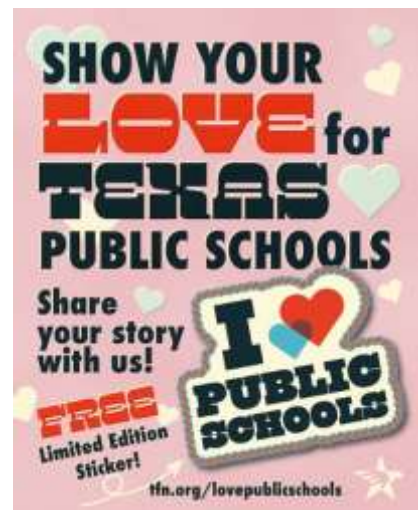
HOW TO CRAFT YOUR STORY

1. What is the issue I want to address?
2. What is the purpose of my presentation? Do I want to persuade, inform, etc.?
3. What powerful examples do I have that I am willing to share?
4. What creative wording or “hook” will I use to get my audience’s attention?
5. What outcome would I like for my audience?
6. What is my call to action?
7. How will I close?

Adapted from [ACLU Iowa How to Tell Your Story](#)

The Texas Freedom Network is seeking stories from teachers, students, parents, and community members who have been positively impacted by public education. They will share the stories you submit on their digital channels, website, and email platforms throughout the 89th Legislative Session!

You may go to the TFN website and share your story. As a thank you for sharing your story, TFN will send you a limited-edition “I ♥ Public Schools” stickers in the mail. Click [SHARE YOUR STORY](#) to access the online form. You may also visit their Facebook page [HERE](#).



Advocates in Action



Kate DiPronio, Jackie Hardee, and Cathy Werner represent our branch at the [50501 Movement](#) rally on February 16.

International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating women's social, economic, cultural, and political achievements and calling for action to accelerate women's equality.

IWD has occurred for over a century, with the first gathering in 1911 supported by over a million people. Today, IWD belongs to all groups collectively everywhere. It is not country, group, or organization-specific.

To learn more about IWD, you may visit the IWD website at [International Women's Day](https://www.internationalwomensday.com/)



The flyer is for an event organized by the United Nations Association of the United States of America, Austin Texas Chapter. It features a portrait of Catherine Weaver, the keynote speaker, who is an Associate Professor at the LBJ School of Public Policy. The event is titled 'FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS: RIGHTS. EQUALITY. EMPOWERMENT.' and is scheduled for March 6, 2025, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. The location is the Neill-Cochran House Museum at 2310 San Gabriel St., Austin, TX 78705. A QR code is provided for registration, and a note indicates that parking is available at the rear entrance. The contact email is jsadeqh@yahoo.com.

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION
of the United States of America
AUSTIN TEXAS CHAPTER

FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS:
RIGHTS. EQUALITY.
EMPOWERMENT.



Keynote Speaker: Catherine Weaver
Associate Professor LBJ School of Public Policy

DATE:
6 MARCH, 2025

TIME:
6:00PM - 7:30PM



Neill-Cochran House Museum,
2310 San Gabriel St.
Austin, TX 78705

*Parking available at rear entrance

 jsadeqh@yahoo.com

The Austin Chapter of the United Nations Association invites you to join them to celebrate International Women's Day. You may scan the barcode on the flyer to register.

March 6, 2025
6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

March is Women's History Month



The theme for Women's History Month in 2025 is "Moving Forward Together! Women Educating & Inspiring Generations." [The National Women's History Alliance \(NWHHA\)](#) chose this theme to honor women's education, leadership, and mentorship contributions.

Goals of the 2025 theme:

- **Recognize:** Celebrate the achievements of women who have inspired and educated others
- **Inspire:** Encourage future generations to pursue education and leadership roles
- **Educate:** Raise awareness of the importance of women's contributions to society

Why is this theme important?

Women have been at the forefront of educational change, from classrooms to boardrooms, grassroots movements, and global initiatives. This theme is especially important when equitable and inclusive education is more critical than ever.

Named Gift Nominations

It's time to send in your nominations to honor members' contributions to the branch and 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 exceptionally completed duties,
- 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 acceptable to make nominations by explaining your support of the nominee without using the form. Please send submissions by **April 1, 2025**, to **Linda Welsh** at lawelsh@gmail.com or by mail at 2023 Cervin Blvd., Austin, TX, 78728.

Single Moms Donation Project

Submitted by Debbie Starr

The Southwest Book Club is continuing to spearhead donations for the Central Austin Community Center, specifically targeting the needs of mothers and families. We're not done with this effort; we committed to one last drive for this worthy community project. Can you please help by donating any of their ***most needed items?***

- Diapers of all sizes
- Household cleaning items: liquid laundry detergent (84 oz), liquid dish soap (14 oz), all-purpose cleanser spray (32 oz or smaller)
- Personal Hygiene items: Dove/Ivory bar soap, body wash (20 oz or smaller), toothpaste and brushes, shampoo and conditioner (12.5 oz size), deodorant, feminine hygiene pads (all sizes)

Purchasing items? Great! Bring any items to the MARCH 12 branch meeting, or leave them on my or Brenda Hahne's doorsteps! Would you prefer to give us money so we can buy items or gift cards? We will accept:

- Zelle to dbbstrr@gmail.com
- VENMO to @Debora-Starr noting CENTRAL AUSTIN COMMUNITY CENTER in answer to "What's This For?"
- Checks made out to Debora Starr (noting Central Aus Com Ctr in the memo field) and sent to 6205 Mesa Grande, Austin 78749
- Checks or cash given in person to Debbie or Brenda Hahne at the next branch meeting (or interest group meeting we attend!)
- All cash will be converted to items on the list above

WE SINCERELY APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS to tangibly help improve the daily lives of women and their families in our Austin community. Huge kudos to all of you!

Austin Branch Centennial Endowed Scholarship Fund -How to Donate

Go to the ACC Foundation website by clicking [Make a Donation](#) to contribute. You may choose an amount or enter a different amount. Then, enter your credit card information. Last and most important, you will *Choose your Designation* from the dropdown menu. **IMPORTANT:** Select *AAUW Austin Centennial Endowment*, then *Give Now*.

If you want to write a check, you may download, print, and complete the [DONATION CARD](#) and mail it with your check to:

Austin Community College Foundation
6101 Highland Campus Dr.
Building 3000, Suite 4270
Austin, TX 78752

Yearbook Additions

New Member

Beatrice Baldwin

Beatrice.baldwin@gmail.com

Also, please review your contact information in the yearbook and report any updates to Sharon Babot at sharonbabot@gmail.com.

Branch Fundrai\$ing News 2024-25

Submitted by Joyce Pulich

Thanks to **Susie and Jack Angel** for hosting the Chili Cookoff event on January 25 at their beautiful home. Thanks to the committee (**Brenda Hahne, Cece Schubert, Debbie Shaeffer, Kathy Stewart, and Susie**), who set up, cleaned up, and donated food and prizes. We tasted six kinds of chili and enjoyed delicious sides and desserts (prepared by **Shirlene Justice** and **Pam Wolfe**). Kathy Stewart's chicken chili won first prize. Those who attended had fun, and the event produced \$820 for the national [Greatest Needs Fund](#).



Winning Chili Recipe



2nd Place – Jack Angel, 1st Place – Kathy Stewart, 3rd Place – Cecile Schubert

The fundraising team will continue to sell handmade greeting cards and candy at branch meetings until we run out. Be sure to collect your spare change and bring your jar or bag of change to the meetings.

Save May 2nd on your calendar for a Kendra Scott event at the South Congress store. The store will donate 20% of profits to our organization. You can buy Mother's Day gifts while supporting the branch.



SAVE the DATE

An Event with
Kendra Scott – 1701 South Congress

Friday, May 2, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Can't make it to the store?
Shop online at kendrascott.com
May 2, 12:00 a.m. – May 3, 11:59 a.m.

Use Give Back Code: **GIVEBACK-IJFMD**
AAUW receives 20% of your purchase

AAUW Georgetown Style Show

March 8, 2025

Berry Creek Country Club

Doors Open at 10:00 a.m.

**Tickets- \$40.00 - Includes a salad luncheon,
dessert and beverages**

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 Scholin** 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**

February Interest Groups

Art Tours

When: Wednesday, March 5, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Davis Gallery, 837 West 12th

“Under the Canopy”

works by Denise M. Fulton and David Everett

Host: Milli Segal

Contacts: Pat Beal, patrbeal@gmail.com,

Terry Whaley, whaleyterry@gmail.com

February Art Tour – Neill Cochran House Museum



Bridge Group

When: Second and Fourth Thursday, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Where: Lamar Senior Activity Center, 2874 Shoal Crest Ave

Contact: Elaine Penn, epenn9915@gmail.com

Central Book Club

When: Monday, March 10, 10:30 a.m.

Where: La Madeleine, 5493 Brodie Lane

Book: *The Testament of Mary* by Colm Tóibín,

Facilitator: Ruth Rubio

Contact: Linda Quintanilla, quintalin@gmail.com

Back row: Pam Watson, Susie Angel, Brenda Hahne, Pat Beal

Front row: Berta Lloyd, Sharon Babot, Nurit Yaskil, Shirlene

Justice, Nancy Riley

Contemporary Literature

When: Monday, March 3, 7:00 p.m.

Where: Zoom

Book: *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride

Leader: Gayle Kanies

Contact: Mary Ellen Scribner, maryescribner@gmail.com

Creative Stitchery

When: Wednesday, March 19, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Home of Elaine Penn, 912 Dartmoor Drive

Project: Embroidery

Hostess: Elaine Penn

Contact: Beverly Locklin, bklocklin@outlook.com

Culture and Cuisine

When: Thursday, March 13, 6:30 p.m.

Theme: Ireland

Where: Home of Berta Lloyd, 1124 Wolf Hollow Drive

Co-Hosts: Berta Lloyd and Brenda Scholin

Contact: Shirlene Justice, shirlenejustice@gmail.com

Hiking Group

Hike 1

When: Thursday, March 6, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Lakeline Park, 1510 Alexis Dr, Cedar Park

Leaders: Gayle Kanies

Hike 2

When: Saturday, March 15, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Doeskin Ranch, 10645 FM 1174, Bertram

Leaders: Cathy Werner

Contacts: Cathy Werner, cathy.werner3586@gmail.com,

Kate DiPronio, ktee523@gmail.com

Friday Morning Book Review

When: Friday, March 7, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Hyde Park Church of Christ, 310 West Avenue B

Book: *Mr. Texas* by Lawrence Wright

Reviewer and Hostess: Beverly Locklin

Contact: Judy Reinhart, jareinhart@att.net

Mystery Book Group

When: Tuesday, March 25, 11:00 a.m.

Where: BJ Brewhouse, The Shops at Arbor Walk, 10515 MoPac

Topic: Luck of the Draw/Author Swap

Contact: Pam Wolfe, piwolfe@yahoo.com

Out-to-Lunch

When: Tuesday, March 18, 11:15 a.m.

Where: Chuys, 4301 West William Cannon, near Costco

Planner: Nancy Ennis, 281-468-8564

Contact: Elaine Penn, epenn9915@gmail.com

PEARS

When: February 15, 5:30 p.m.

Where: DiMassi's Mediterranean Buffet, 701 E Stassney Lane, Unit B

Contact: Milli Stecker: mstecker@austin.rr.com

Wine Tasters

When: Sunday, March 16, 4:00 p.m.

Wine: Rosé

Where: Home of Sharon Babot, 110 Brins Way, Dripping Springs

Hosts: Sharon Babot and Nancy Ennis

Contact: Elaine Penn, epenn9915@gmail.com

Southwest Book Group

When: Monday, March 10, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Where: Home of Kathy Stewart, 6118 Tasajillo Trail

Book: *Jackie: Public, Private, Secret* by Randy Taraborrelli

Facilitator: Susie Angel

Host: Kathy Stewart

Contact: Brenda Hahne, bwhahne@gmail.com



Ron and Kate DiPronio hiking at Buescher State Park, then lunch at Comfort Café in Smithville.

February Out-to-Lunch Blue Corn Restaurant in



Joyce Pulich, Betty Schmidt, Cathy Werner, Nurit Yaskil, Connie Munoz, Pat Beal, Terry Whaley, Berta Lloyd