Our Mission: To honor women and girls, empowering them through education,

service and leadership development.

Co-President’s Message

There is no doubt that we are in hugely trying times. This pandemic is a new experience for all of us, and the uncertainty of the future is terribly difficult because we are all accustomed to being in reasonable control of what comes next. The only thing we do have control over is how we face this crisis.

Jennifer and I suggest you think about this quote:

**“What seem to us bitter trials are often blessings in disguise.” -Oscar Wilde**

We both are trying to focus on the hidden blessings this time brings to us.

Jennifer mentions, “My busy teenagers are all at home. We have spent our nights playing games and watching home movies. We somehow never have time for this. Many closets have been cleaned. We are eating as a family every night. I am learning new technology (Zoom meetings). And I am practicing better hygiene :)”

Carolyn says, “I am so blessed to have the companionship of my husband expanded beyond our usual time together, and to have on-line communication with many friends and family members with whom we don’t usually have regular contact. I also have done some “deep cleaning and sorting” that had been put off. And I can see the possibilities that government bodies may be persuaded by this crisis to change the way we support families in normal times. What a huge hidden blessing that would be for all of us!”

Carolyn Bogott and Jen Lawhead

Co-Presidents, Austin Chapter – AAUW

**April Program**

We value the health and safety of our members. For this reason, we regret to inform you that we are canceling the April 14, 2020 meeting. We miss seeing you and hope circumstances will allow us to see you all at the banquet on May 12.

Jenni Braaten & Barb Hunter

Program Co-Chairs

**Small Groups**

**PM Book Group**

The evening book group will be meeting virtually, via the meeting app Zoom, on April 20th at 7 PM! We will be discussing *Waking Up White* by Debbie Irving. PLEASE RSVP to Rae Dawn Rao if you would like to receive the meeting invites via email with your reminder on April 19th. If you have questions regarding how to join via the app, Rae Dawn can also try to assist. The scheduled meeting links are as follows and have to be in ½ hour time blocks due to meeting length restrictions for Zoom (basic): Session 1 (7-7:30) <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/434610622>, Session 2 (7:30-8 PM) <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/492994979>. In May we will be discussing *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Dalia Owens.

**Travel Club**

I hope and trust that this finds each one of you healthy, happy, and at home.  I’m sure you are not surprised, but I just want to confirm, that the Travel Club will be cancelled for April, and maybe for more months in the future. We will just wait and see how soon this coronavirus gets under control. Please take good care of yourself and be careful.  We will plan to visit the “Tea Room,” in the future, BUT.........we need more members to share a special travel experience with our group. So, PLEASE look through your scrapbooks, photos, travel diaries, souvenirs, etc. and then let me know if you are willing to share your special experience with us. Thank you so very much. We have had such excellent and interesting experiences shared by Ann, Dorothy, and Terry. We learned a great deal from each of these members.   I look forward to hearing from many of you. Again, take good care of yourself and stay healthy. ~DedaRae Graber

**First Friday**

First Friday Luncheons have been cancelled for April and May. If the situation improves, we may reconsider summer lunches as we do need to support our local restaurants when they reopen!

**AM Book Group and Great Decisions have been cancelled for April.**

**What Are Your Book Suggestions for Our Annual Branch Report for the State Publication?**

Our branch is asked to submit three book suggestions with a short synopsis of each.  If you have suggestions, please send them to Carolyn ([csbogott@charter.net](mailto:csbogott@charter.net))  by April 15th.  Many thanks!

**Public Policy**

Evelyn Guentzel

It is WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH. To conclude the month, celebrate a life which, 100 years later, tells us how far we have come, and how far we still have to go. This is a storied life\*.

Happy Birthday Nancy Pelosi.

A few dozen people gathered one early March evening at the National Museum of American History to celebrate the opening of a new exhibition marking the centennial (’Susan B. Anthony, Jeannette Rankin, the Suffragettes, 20th century brave women who carried the torch) of women’s suffrage.

The speaker who wielded that gavel on that day was, for the first time, a woman. Though Nancy Pelosi does not lack for self-confidence, she rarely indulges in public self-reflection. On that night at the Smithsonian, however, she gave a nod to those who had paved the way for her.

“The women who did all of this — oh my gosh — we revere them. We hold them up as icons. But what we hear people say is, ‘Yes, they were icons. You are troublemakers.’ They were considered troublemakers in their time, so maybe there is a future for all of us,” Pelosi said with a laugh. “But I can just tell you, a troublemaker with a gavel — that’s the real difference.”

Power is not influence. Power is when you have the ability to make change. ... Being speaker of the House, that’s real power.

“She knew how to be organized. She crammed a lot into one day,” recalls fellow California Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D), a friend from back then. “Those are transferable talents to heading up the caucus. You know, people underestimate that.”

I always say to people, ‘Being a woman — yes, you’re a woman. That’s self-evident. Now show what else you have to offer.’

\*Washington Post, March 25.  The article is long, and is an amazing story of this woman, mother of five, activist, and the challenges she faced as she rose through the male culture of leadership.

Stay safe: Keep reading!

**Thank You Carolyn!!**

Carolyn Bogott has done such a phenomenal job the past few years providing regular member spotlight articles for our monthly newsletter. We want to take the opportunity of an ‘open’ month to thank her for connecting our membership in this manner and for doing it with such a cheerful heart. On that note, desperate times call for desperate measures. Here is a little bit of info on your newsletter editor!

**Member Spotlight – Rae Dawn Rao**

A person wearing glasses

Description automatically generatedI grew up with my four siblings on a dairy farm in the rolling hills of southwestern Wisconsin, near Richland Center. My parents will celebrate 50 years together this May and still live on the farm (minus the cows). I attended the University of Wisconsin – Madison where I received my B.S. and M.S. in Food Science. In addition to my education, I also found time there to feed my love for music by playing the mellophone in the marching band! After completing my degrees in 2003, my husband Chet & I moved to Austin when I took my first job as a product development scientist at Hormel Foods. The last 12 years of my career I have spent working in various roles in regulatory affairs for Hormel dealing with food product information and how it is portrayed on food labels in compliance with federal regulations. I have two daughters, Anita (13) and Maya (10). They keep us busy! Seventeen years in Austin have sure flown by!

So why did I join AAUW? It was actually a direct phone call! I still recall Carolyn Simms (Co-president with Carolyn Bogott at the time) calling me up, out of the blue, to invite me to check out AAUW shortly after moving to Austin. I would just like to emphasize how vital that human connection is to the ability of our branch to continue to thrive and grow! Please consider inviting and bringing along your acquaintances to future AAUW events. In addition to putting together our monthly newsletters, I also have very much enjoyed being a part of the evening book group for the duration of my membership. I still fondly recall the evening book group throwing me a ‘Book Shower’ when Anita was born. I enjoy and appreciate the learning, mission, and sense of community connection this group has provided and I just can’t think of a finer group of women in Austin to be a part of!

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| **AAUW** | | |
| **March 1 - March 31, 2020** | | |
|  |  |  |
| **Period: 3/1/20 - 3/31/20** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Opening Balance:** |  | **$12,381.16** |
|  |  |  |
| **Income:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Income:** | **$ -** | $12,381.16 |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Disbursements:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Womens history awards | 300.00 |  |
| Womens history speaker | 400.00 |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Disbursements:** | **$700.00** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Closing Balance 3/31/20** |  | **$11,681.16** |

*Mission Statement*: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.

*Vision Statement:* AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

**Southern Highlights Editor:** Rae Dawn Rao [rao\_raedawn@yahoo.com](mailto:rao_raedawn@yahoo.com) **Minnesota State Website:** <http://www.aauwmn.org> **Association Website:**  <http://www.aauw.org> **Association e-mail: info@aauw.org**



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