



Catherine Cox, President



April Edition 2023

## President's Message

### Unsung Heroines

My Friends, I want to share with you a moment from my recent trip to Washington, D.C. I had never visited the African American Museum, part of the Smithsonian projects, so I went by myself while my husband Robert was working in the Archives.

I was moved by many of the Museum's exhibits, but especially drawn to artworks portraying women. A series of pencil and graphite drawings by Lava Thomas (born 1958), entitled "Mugshot Portraits: Women of the Montgomery Bus Boycott," were particularly compelling. These drawings were made from the original mugshots of women who were arrested for supporting Rosa Parks.

Euretta Adair was one of the activists who was arrested for planning and participating in the Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-1956), supporting Rosa Parks. We rightly applaud the young black woman Rosa Parks, who was punished for refusing to give up her city bus seat to a white man, but we often forget to acknowledge the many women who suffered and suffer still for civil rights. Thomas shakes us from our complacency, for she depicts not one, but twelve women in her series.



Euretta Adair

You may have recently read that several publishers attempting to comply with Florida's new "Anti-Woke" laws have downplayed the issue of race in their recent drafts of Florida social studies textbooks. One draft text erased altogether the reason that Rosa Parks was asked to move from her seat. In this revision, she was asked to move not because "she was Black" or because of "the color of her skin," she was just "asked to move." Students, reading this, might wonder why this incident is important at all? Bus boycotter Euretta Adair, who had always ridden in the back of the bus, knew exactly why Parks was asked to move and why she was arrested. The artist Lava Thomas, born several years after these events, also knew the reason for Parks and the boycotters' arrests. Now, we are the remembrancers. We must never forget, or let our children forget the heroism of these brave black women, lest our nation's violent history repeat itself.

As a child of the South, I have long known the importance of the civil rights movement, especially as it unfolded in my home state of Alabama. I am all too familiar with the terrain: the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, where marchers, hoping to walk peacefully to the state capital Montgomery, faced mounted police with tear-gas and clubs; the streets of Birmingham, where Eugene "Bull" Connor ordered fire-hosing and the unleashing of attack dogs on protests and where Martin Luther King was jailed; the University of Alabama, where Autherine Lucy was harassed and expelled simply for wanting to study there; and the city of Montgomery, where Parks and Adair were arrested. There is always a disconnect for me that the bucolic land I remember and still love dealt such heavy blows to other people because of race. If I feel some guilt because of this brutal history, then "let it be."



Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

# 2023 Sue Stanford Scholarship Recipient

by Vickie Natale

## Kennedy Perez

AAUW Corpus Christi Branch presented its 2023 Sue Stanford Scholarship on March 4, 2023, to Kennedy Perez, an undergraduate history major at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Book Finders Co-Chair Kristin Conlan recognized Dr. Claudia Rueda, Associate Professor of History at TAMUCC, who nominated Kennedy for this scholarship based on her drive and scholarly work. Kennedy has been working the past year as a grader for the history program, and Dr. Rueda remarked on Kennedy's diligence as a grader and her thoughtful comments on student papers.

Kennedy has proven her commitment to her education since to complete her degree in history this semester required that she drive two hours to school every day. Kennedy is currently exploring her options for graduate education. We were delighted to show her our support through this scholarship, and we enjoyed meeting Kennedy and her family at the March meeting.



*Dr. Claudia Rueda, Kennedy Perez; Branch President Dr. Catherine Cox; Book Finders co-chair Kristin Conlan*



*Kennedy Perez and her family.*

In 2012, the AAUW Corpus Christi Branch established the Sue Stanford Scholarship in recognition of Sue's outstanding commitment and long-term dedication to our Branch and to the mission of AAUW. Sue Stanford was the founder of the Branch's Book Finders group, which she chaired for many years. Through the tireless efforts of the Book Finders, the Branch has raised funds annually for scholarships and other community outreach projects. Each year, the Branch selects a Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi student to receive the \$1,500 Sue Stanford Scholarship.



Corpus Christi Branch Meeting  
Saturday, April 1, 2023, 10:30 a.m.

YWCA, Community Room  
4601 Corona Drive

Topic: Capturing Coastal Bend Wildlife in Photographs

Speaker: David Sikes, Photographer  
Former Caller-Times Outdoors Reporter

By Mary Sherwood



**David Sikes** has a distinguished career as an outdoor writer, conservationist and wildlife photographer. He describes himself as a product of a Catholic and Cajun upbringing who grew up fishing, hunting and camping in the Bayou Teche area of South Louisiana. Sikes is also an Eagle Scout and has a journalism degree from the University of Houston.

After working as a news reporter for several small Texas newspapers, David joined the Corpus Christi Caller-Times staff in 1997, covering Port Aransas, Rockport, Aransas Pass, as well as coastal issues. In 1998, David became the paper's Outdoors columnist. He retired in 2019, after 23 years with the Caller-Times.

Conservation issues he has embraced include the promotion of freshwater inflows into Texas estuaries, boating courtesy on shallow bays, youth recruitment into the outdoors, red snapper management, seagrass protection, reopening of Cedar Bayou, and Texas Parks & Wildlife Coastal Fisheries management strategies.

Sikes continues to promote coastal and conservation issues, while writing about fishing, hunting, camping, nature photography, state and federal wildlife and fisheries regulations and legislative issues involving the same as an editor/columnist for Saltwater Angler Magazine, and writer/photographer for other Texas publications.

Sikes has received numerous awards, including the Ducks Unlimited Wetland Conservation Achievement Award for 2012 in the communications category, the Harvey Weil Professional Conservationist of the Year in 2012, and Charly McTee Outdoor Media Award from the Texas Wildlife Association.

He currently holds the position of board secretary for the Wildlife in Focus conservation/education non-profit and is editor of the Wildlife in Focus book series. David is a founding and life member of FlatsWorthy, a nonprofit of diverse anglers with mutual respect, who promote boating courtesy, while denouncing behavior that destroys or degrades our shallow-water fisheries. He lives on north Padre Island with his miniature dachshund Pepper. His photography is displayed at the Padre Island Art Gallery and the Port Aransas Center for the Arts.



## Membership Dues for 2023-2024

by Vickie Natale

A recent email from AAUW, Inc., informs us that “AAUW National dues for FY24 will be \$72 in accordance with the three-year increase implemented by the AAUW Board of Directors back in October 2020. This rate becomes effective in the system on April 1<sup>st</sup>.”

State and Branch dues remain at \$13 and \$12, respectively. That makes the 2023-2024 dues total \$97 for our current members. AAUW National will be sending reminders to current members for renewal. Instructions will be provided on how to renew online, or you may send your check to Vickie Natale (see Branch Yearbook for address)

If you know someone you would like to invite to join our branch, be sure to tell that person that AAUW, Inc., is continuing to offer half-price on national dues to first-time members. For 2023-2024, new members would pay one-half the \$72 for national dues, plus the state and branch dues, for a total of \$61 the first year. Spread the word!

## Equal Pay Day 2023

by Vickie Natale



The AAUW Corpus Christi Branch was pleased to co-sponsor this year’s **Equal Pay Day Luncheon**, held at the YWCA on Wednesday, March 15 from 12:10 -12:50. The speaker was Mary Hine of CAPTRUST, who talked about personal debt-reduction. Hine emphasized that not all debt is created equal. Debt that creates something of value, such as a college education loan or a home mortgage, is considered good debt. Families should know their debt to income ratio to determine whether they are handling too much debt. Generally speaking, a debt-to-income ratio of 36% or less is desirable. Hine answered questions from the audience concerning tips on how to tackle large debt. About 35 people attended the event, and everyone was treated to a free lunch.

April 22, 2023



# March 2023 Branch Meeting

by Vickie Natale

The AAUW Corpus Christi Branch held a meeting on March 4, 2023, at the Antonio E. Garcia Arts & Education Center, at 10:30 a.m. After introduction of new members and guests, Janet Blanke introduced our guest speaker, Esmeralda Herrera-Teran, director of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's Antonio E. Garcia Arts and Education Center. She has served as director of the Center since 2020.



Herrera-Teran spoke about the mission of the Garcia Center which provides intervention in reading and mathematics for at-risk students, delivers health education classes and counseling services to underserved populations, and cultivates the arts with events that enhance creative thinking, problem solving, and stewardship for all community members.

Currently, the Garcia Center offers 138 days per year of after-school programming and 29 days of summer programming for at-risk students. Tutors are volunteers or they are college students who are compensated through the Federal Work Study program under *America Reads/America Counts*, a program to provide training for students to be tutors in reading and mathematics. The Center also works with Grow Local South Texas to provide a gardening experience for students in the grounds behind the Center.

Esmeralda Herrera-Teran stated that the Garcia Center recently started an “intergenerational programming.” Once a month, senior citizens from a local independent living facility are brought to the Center to interact with the children for an hour. The Center has found this connection to be beneficial for both the children and the senior citizens.

As part of its support, the Center provides backpacks filled with school supplies for at-risk students. Approximately three hundred students received backpacks last summer. The Center contacts CCISD to get a list of the items required for each grade level so that they can prepare the backpacks with as much as possible of those items.

The Garcia Center has primarily focused on kindergarten through fifth grade; however, they are currently developing more teen programs. One new program is *YES – Young Entrepreneurial Scholars* – a program designed for sixth through eighth graders that teaches marketing, finance, networking, and the confidence needed to develop a small business. The program is being offered to 40 students.

Herrera-Teran emphasized that there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer at the Center for those interested. Volunteers build a close relationship with students through teaching, counseling, mentoring, and tutoring. Interested persons are invited to attend any of their events to see if they would like to assist with any of the programs from reading, to STEM programs, the arts, or gardening.

President Catherine Cox and STEM Chair Janet Blanke thanked Esmeralda Herrera-Teran with a speaker's gift for her informative presentation. After the meeting, members were invited to tour the facilities.



STEM chair Janet Blanke, speaker Esmeralda Herrera-Teran, President Catherine Cox

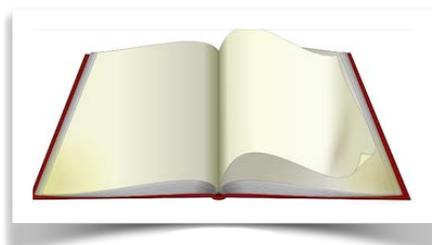
Visit AAUW-Corpus Christi website for complete article [corpuschristi-tx.aauw.net](https://corpuschristi-tx.aauw.net)

(See Branch Yearbook for contact information and/or location of event.)

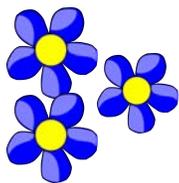


From Susan Birchfield

**The Lunch Bunch** will be meeting on Tuesday, April 18th, at 12:30 pm at Olive Garden, located at 5258 SPID. Please RSVP to Susan Birchfield if you plan to attend.



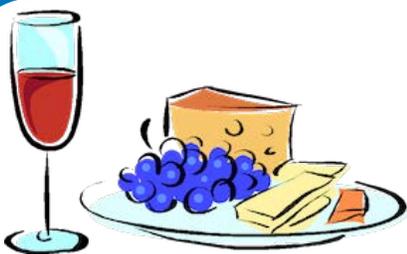
From Dottie Ewing



**Page Turners** will meet Monday, April 18, at 7 p.m. in Jan Hilton's home. Catherine Cox will review *Atonement* by Ian McEwan. Catherine has provided us with a synopsis:

*The story begins on an English estate one summer's day in 1935, when a precocious thirteen year old girl named Briony witnesses from an upstairs window her older sister and a young man named Paul, the son of a servant, together at a fountain. Briony's misinterpretation of their actions and her rigid hold upon a lie result in heartbreak for the sisters and for Paul. The adult Briony's sense of guilt and desire for forgiveness unfold against the backdrop of World War II.*

This will be our last review for the program year, so don't miss it! Please let Jan know if you are able to attend.



From Susan Birchfield

**Wine and Cheese** will be meeting at at Sylvia Rendon's home at 5 pm, Sunday, April 16th. Everyone attending is asked to bring either a bottle of wine or an appetizer. Please note that the date has been changed from the second Sunday to the third because of Easter.



From Michelle Balis

**PlayGoers** is planning to go to Aurora Arts Theater for *Noises Off!* on Friday, April 21. Please let me know by Monday, April 17 if you want to go so I can buy tickets.