



Corpus Christi (TX) Branch

American Association of University Women

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

Vision: Equity for all.

January Edition 2025

President's Message



Kelly Gonzalez, President

The end of the year has always seemed to be a crossroads for me. It's a time of the year to reflect back on the year that is ending and a time of the year to look ahead to the year that is beginning. I have always seen the New Year as a fresh start and look forward to a new beginning.

This year I am concerned about what the New Year brings with the incoming administration, something I have never experienced before. But with words like retribution, persecution and prosecution associated with the new administration, it's hard to not be concerned and a bit fearful for our great country. I am and always have been proud to be an American and know we are the envy of other nations because of the liberties and rights we, as Americans, have.

But, in reading the press release on the AAUW reaction to the 2024 national election results I can see what we have accomplished and know if we stand united, we can still continue to fight against the erosion of women's rights. Despite the overturning of Roe vs. Wade, AAUW championed 10 state ballot measures that would codify into state laws and constitutions women's rights to abortion access without government interference. Seven of the 10 states passed measures to maintain or expand abortion rights.

The outcome of the election means we all need to double down on our beliefs in preparation for what's coming. We need to continue fighting for our libraries, first amendment protections for our journalists, and women's health care and continue the push for the Equal Rights Amendment to become an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

It won't be easy but I know we are all committed to doing what we can to push our mission forward. Maybe I am feeling a bit more hopeful now. Thank you all for being such incredible and intelligent women. I am looking forward to our time together in 2025 and I wish you all a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

Bridge Duo are Top Scorers

By Annie Huckabee



Bridge Chair Lessie Hoffman and member Frances Quinn are top scorers in our AAUW-CC Bridge group.

Proof: In recent play, these two champs bid and made small slam — winning 12 tricks out of a possible 13.

Congratulations Lessie and Frances on excellent communication and an accurate evaluation of your hand.

AAUW Texas Public Policy News

By Vickie Natale

AAUW Texas hosted a Zoom meeting on December 3, 2024, to discuss legislative priorities with [Kate Kuhlmann](#) of [Hillco Partners](#) who serves as our lobbyist. Kate gave a short description of the legislative process and timeline for filling bills. In her presentation, she encouraged us to contact our local representatives to have an impact on legislation of interest. To find who represents your area, go to capitol.texas.gov and use the representative lookup. You can also search bills, amendments, and other information related to the Texas government from this webpage. If you missed the presentation, you can listen to the recording at: [AAUW Texas Legislative Update with Kate Kuhlmann](#)



2024 Holiday Luncheon

By Vickie Natale

Our Branch celebrated the holidays on December 7, 2024, with lunch and fellowship at the All Saints' Episcopal Church. President Kelly Gonzalez made arrangements for a sliced ham to be delivered from Diamond Point Catering Services, and members contributed money, favorite side dishes, and a cornucopia of desserts. The amazing buffet of food was a scrumptious sight to behold.

The 33 members in attendance enjoyed socializing with friends and meeting our two newest members. Before we served the buffet, Deanne Purcell led us in a merry holiday game called the Left-Right Gift Exchange. Members stood in a circle, holding their regifted Christmas ornament, and as Deanne read [Night Right Before Christmas](#), members passed gifts around the circle based on the occurrence of the words "left" and "right" in the story. Bursts of laughter erupted each time a quick change was required. At the end, we were all blessed with a new treasured ornament to take home.

As a fundraiser for the Community Outreach efforts, raffle tickets were sold. Diana Reyes, chair of the Community Outreach Committee, ingeniously obtained \$400 worth of gift cards from two donors to be used for prizes. The first donor was [Jessica Arredondo](#),

a financial advisor at Edward Jones, who donated \$300. The second donor was Tony Posada who donated a \$100 gift certificate to be used at his restaurant, [The Blue Clove Seafood Bar and Grill](#), located on Everhart Road. We truly appreciate these generous donations from our community members, and we appreciate the efforts Diana Reyes made to obtain these outside donations. After lunch

was enjoyed, tickets were drawn from the four separate buckets, and the winners were: Alka Khanolkar, Amazon card; Annie Huckabee, Target card; Vickie Natale, Walmart card; and Cheryl Sanders, Blue Clove restaurant certificate.

Members also enjoyed perusing through items brought for the silent auction. One particular stained glass floor lamp was a hot commodity. Many members were able to obtain a new cherished item at a bargain price.

We thank All Saints Episcopal Church for the use of their facility. The Labyrinth room is spacious, and the kitchen facilities make it an ideal location for hosting luncheons.

Wishing everyone a joyous holiday season and a happy new year!



Pictured (left to right) is Diana Reyes, chair of the Community Outreach Committee, and raffle winners: Cheryl Sanders, Blue Clove restaurant certificate; Vickie Natale, Walmart card; Alka Khanolkar, Amazon card; and Annie Huckabee, Target card.

2024 Holiday Luncheon Photo Gallery



2024 Holiday Luncheon Photo Gallery



Santa's Workshop: YWTeen Christmas Shopping Spree

By Diana Cardenas

On a cool, gray December 14th afternoon, the YWCA, decked out in festive Christmas decorations, hummed with cheerful activities of 44 YWTeen girls who participated in the annual YWTeen Holiday Shopping spree. AAUW Corpus Christi, with its Community Outreach Committee, is a partner of the YWCA and its Executive Director Nancy Wesson Dodd and the YWTeen staff members.

The girls, fifth and sixth graders from various schools, selected gifts for their families and pets and chose paper, ribbons, and bows to wrap their gifts. With much excitement the girls worked at a spacious wrapping area that resembled Santa's busy workshop. They sat at long tables, busily cutting paper, wrapping each gift, taping bows and ribbons, and signing gift name cards for parents, siblings, and pets.

Their cheerful smiles conveyed their sense of accomplishment and pride in wrapping meaningful presents for their loved ones. They also had time to solve puzzles, coloring, and watching the movie, "The Grinch That Stole Christmas," while enjoying chocolate Grinch cupcakes.

The girls were assisted by thirty attentive volunteers, representing various local organizations, who guided them in each part of their tasks. A large group of volunteers are members of the Flour Bluff High School Interact Club, the high school equivalent of Rotary. The girls, ranging from freshman to seniors, embrace the guiding principle, "Service above Self." These volunteers are led by Caren Childers of the Padre Island-Flour Bluff Rotary.

Several volunteers represent Value Bank. Also, volunteers included students from the Del Mar College student AAUW organization, led by sponsor Cheryl Sanders, Associate Vice-President for Student Affairs, a member of AAUW.

AAUW members who participated included AAUW President Kelly Gonzalez, Finance Officer Vickie Natale, past president Catherine Cox, Shirley Selz, Carie Roach, Alka Khanolkar, Sylvia Whitworth, Jo Rios, Diana Cardenas, and Diana Reyes. Diana Reyes serves as the chair of the Community Outreach Committee that spent weeks interacting with the YWCA to plan phases of the holiday activity. Another member of this committee is Deanne Purcell, who designed the activities for the teens to solve puzzles and color.

YWCA YWTeen instructors guided students at important registration and completion steps. We saw parents pick up happy YWTeens, pleased to carry their large shopping bags filled with beautifully wrapped presents to place under the family Christmas tree.

The raffle at the annual AAUW Holiday Luncheon generates the funds to help sponsor this emotionally fulfilling activity for teens and volunteers during this special time of giving and hope.

YWTeen Christmas Shopping Photo Gallery



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Community Outreach Committee

YW Teen Christmas Shopping Event



The YWTeen Holiday Shopping Event 2024 was a great success!

Thank you to all our Branch members who volunteered at the event. Your help made the event a wonderful success! We are also grateful for all the help we got from the YW Teen staff, our Del Mar Members and the High School volunteers from the Rotary Club.

Our committee is very appreciative of the support the Branch members gave our raffle at the December luncheon. It was a remarkable success! Thank you!

Special Committee News

Bookfinders are Back



The Bookfinders are very excited to learn that the renovation project at Neyland Library is now completed. We are looking forward to holding four book sales to support our mission to serve women and girls in our community.

The book sale schedule for 2025 follows:

- January 23-25
- March 27-29
- June 12-14

For more information, contact Kristin Conlan.

Interest Group News



Wine and Cheese
Sunday, Jan. 12th
at 5 pm



From Susan Birchfield

Wine and cheese will be meeting on January 12th at 5 pm at the Tannin’s Wine Bar located at 7629 S. Staples.

Please RSVP to Susan Birchfield if you plan to attend.



From Susan Birchfield

Lunch Bunch will be meeting on January 21st at 12:30 pm at The Blue Clove, located at 5884 Everhart.

Please RSVP to Susan Birchfield if you plan to attend.



[\(1\) AAUW-CC | Facebook](#)

We would love to have pictures and short video clips from your AAUW activities! Please send them to either Lara or Kay at aauw.cc.social@gmail.com. Also include what the picture or video is, the date, and who is in the picture or video. We would like to showcase our members! Our social media email address is aauw.cc.social@gmail.com