



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.

March Edition 2025

## AAUW Monthly Meeting, March 2025

**What:** AAUW Monthly Meeting  
**When:** Saturday, March 1: fellowship at 10:00 am, program at 10:30 am  
**Where:** YWCA , [3026 S. Staples](#)  
**Speaker:** Dr. Mark W. Robbins  
**Topic:** *Oral History in Genealogical Research: Possibilities and Challenges*



Mark W. Robbins is a Professor of History at Del Mar College and holds a Ph.D. in History from Brown University. His work on oral history, labor history, memory, cultural history, and consumer politics has appeared in journals, including *Labor History*, *The Public Historian*, *Oral History Review*, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, *The Historical Journal of Massachusetts*, *Michigan History*, *American Educational History*, and *The Sound Historian*.



# President's Message



Kelly Gonzalez, President

I was looking through a bookshelf recently and came across something I don't remember buying. I am sure that has never happened to you! I found a collection of handbooks for the Bluntzer Study Club ranging from 1963 to 1972. My guess is I got them at a book sale from our Texana collection. In looking through them, I was reminded of the AAUW archives housed in the La Retama Library and noticed how alike our organizations are. They were a real no-nonsense group of ladies. If you wanted to resign, you had to do so in writing and no resignations would be accepted unless dues were paid in full. The dues were \$5 per year! If you missed three meetings in a row you could be dropped from the membership with a two-thirds vote. Yikes. Nothing about interest groups or fun!

As different as that seems from us fun-loving women, their mission, committees and programs were very similar to ours. The club met monthly September through May. Each year the study group had a theme or "course of study" so that all programs for that year were related to the theme. The program for each meeting that year supported the theme and had a great title describing the program. The ones that caught my eye were "Choice, not chance, determines human destiny", "Education is not a mere means to life; Education is life", and, the one that really made me stop and think, was a quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Our American Heritage is threatened as much by our own indifference as by the most unscrupulous office, or by the most powerful threat." I think we all understand that our American Heritage is under threat now unlike ever before. We cannot let our indifference threaten our Heritage and our Democracy.

Now is the time to make our voices heard. We have been asked for help from AAUW Texas for school vouchers, but the need does not end there. As we reach out to you for help, please take action and help us all return our country to the great nation we all love and want. I want to close this message the way the Bluntzer Study Club started their meetings. After the meeting was called to order, the members would recite their Collect for Club Women, which was written by Mary Stewart in 1904. For those of you who don't know, a Collect is a short prayer used in Christian liturgy. (I Googled it!) I think the words are ones we can all live by.

Keep us, O God, from pettiness; let us be large in thought, in word, in deed. Let us be done with fault-finding and leave off self-seeking.

May we put away all pretense and meet each other face to face without self-pity and without prejudice. May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous.

Let us take time for all things; make us grow calm, serene, and gentle. Teach us to put into action our better impulses, straight-forward and unafraid.

Grant that we may realize that it is the little things that create differences; that in the big things of life we are at one.

And may we strive to touch and to know the great, common, human heart of us all. And, oh Lord God, let us forget not to be kind.

# February 2025 Meeting

*by Dr. Diana Cardenas*

## The Wappingers: Lessons Learned through Multicultural Interaction

A transplant to our area, Dorothy Barringer was born and raised in the Hudson Valley of New York, the only child of two hardworking parents. When Dorothy graduated high school in 1992, her counselor told her she was not suited for college. So, she worked at various jobs.

After marriage and three children, she and her husband moved to Texas, where she worked as a technician for an eye doctor. After Hurricane Harvey and Covid-19—and 30 years later—defying the prejudice of her high school counselor—Ms. Barringer enrolled at Del Mar College.

She excelled in her studies, and she joined Del Mar's AAUW and the Vocal Vikings competitive speech club. In her community, she was active with her church, her son's Boy Scout troop, the Rockport Little Theatre, and the Aransas Repertoire Theatre. Her supporters at Del Mar recognized her achievements and recommended her for the successful induction in Del Mar's Hall of Fame in 2023.

Dorothy graduated from Del Mar College Summa Cum Laude with an Associate's degree in Teaching 8-12th grade history. Now at TAMUCC Dorothy majors in History and participates in a year of clinical teaching at King High School. Graduating in May 2025 with a Bachelor's degree in History and a Teaching Certificate, Dorothy's goal is to motivate students to reach beyond the limits placed before them and dare to pursue their dreams.

On Saturday, February 1, 2025, as the 2024 AAUW Sue Stanford Scholarship recipient, Ms. Barringer spoke to 22 AAUW members about her research into the Wappinger Indigenous Tribe, early Native Americans who thrived in the Hudson River Valley-New York area from the 1600's to the late 1700's.

The symbol for her junior high school was a Wappinger, and the students called themselves "Wappingers," but they did not know that the name referred to a flourishing, accomplished group that identified as stewards of the land who protected ownership of their territory through legal documents.

This unique Native American group evolved through multicultural interactions with groups and institutions. As experienced partners, they fought alongside the British against the French and Iroquois in the Seven Years War. During the American Revolution interactions of the Wappingers took them to the local populations commanded by General Washington, and they volunteered to scout the Hudson River Valley to relay actions of the enemy Hessians.

The Wappingers had knowledge of the importance of land ownership and documents to protect their land. When the patroon system usurped their lands, the Wappingers used the court system to fight for their cause. In her research Ms. Barringer discovered the last "Sachem" or chief Daniel Nimham, a diplomat who possessed and held a document that depicted ownership of the Wappinger lands.

Today a project exists to reinstate land that belonged to the Wappingers, particularly to safeguard natural places, their ancient homes, and burial sites. Titled the "Open Space Institute," it is a strategic land protection in the Hudson Valley to promote and protect good stewardship of the land.

President Kelly Gonzalez; Diana Cardenas, Programs VP; and Cheryl Sanders, Del Mar AAUW Sponsor thanked Ms. Barringer for providing a riveting historical account (without notes) of the important Wappinger group. A Book Finders gift certificate was given to Dorothy in appreciation of her presentation.



*Cheryl Sanders, Dorothy Barringer, Kelly Gonzalez, & Diana Cardenas*

# Teen Bookfest by the Bay

by Dr. Vickie Natale

The 2025 [Teen Bookfest by the Bay](#) was held on February 22 from 10 am to 4:30 pm. This is a free book festival featuring middle grade and young adult authors. The annual festival supports, promotes, and celebrates the joy of reading by connecting teens to local and award-winning authors whose writings span across genres and interest levels. The event is hosted by Coastal Bend librarians and educators, and it is funded by grants and donations.

Our AAUW Branch's annual donation to the *Friends of the Corpus Christi Public Libraries* is used for the welcoming dinner held for the 25 authors the night before the event. I had the honor of representing our Branch at the dinner event on February 21. I sat with author [Rachel Toalson](#) who is an award-winning author, poet, and essayist. She lives in San Antonio with her husband and five children. Her latest book, *Something Maybe Magnificent*, features a teen who is unhappy about her mother dating a new man. Critics say the book "thoughtfully and sincerely explores themes of womanhood."

It was such a pleasure to get to speak to Rachel and to other authors attending the dinner. Each author with whom I spoke told me that it is particularly difficult to navigate the current climate around YA books. The increase in book banning across the nation has their publishers advising them when a book cannot be sponsored because its content will make it difficult to sell. It was an honor to represent our Branch to these fearless YA authors who need support from groups like ours.



### Planning the Miller High School Senior Girls' Recognition

Six members of the Community Outreach Committee benefitted from meeting Ms. Melissa Jimenez, the new Career Counselor at Miller High School, who accepted the position after the previous counselor left. We met in the Career Center on February 17, 2025.

Ms. Jimenez met with us early this year to discuss the components of the Senior Girls' Recognition Celebration, which has already been held for four years, and to collaborate on the goals for this event, the criteria for selecting recipients, the responsibilities of each recipient, the awards, the campus celebration, the date, the invitations, and the guests.

As a guide, committee members used a key letter, written by Chairperson of the Outreach Committee, Diana Reyes, which outlined the important elements of the senior girls' celebration. We discussed each element and agreed on criteria for selecting ten (10) senior girls:

#### **Criteria:**

Senior female students who improved their grades during their final semesters, demonstrated good citizenship, articulated a desire for higher education, and embraced a successful college application process. Ms. Jimenez should give consideration to first-generation college students.

As part of the selection, Ms. Jimenez will ask each recipient to write a "Personal Statement" to be given to the members of the Outreach Committee. The members will use information from the personal statements to introduce each recipient at the recognition celebration.

#### **Date of Celebration:**

Members and Ms. Jimenez focused the discussion on the day of the celebration—the date of consequence. We articulated the need for all the ten senior girls to participate, be recognized and receive a monetary award of \$200. Ms. Jimenez informed us that many senior students leave school in the early afternoon, as some already have enough high school credits so they have off periods and others have to go to work. She suggested that we schedule the celebration at 10 am. She will examine the key dates of testing and other activities to avoid conflicts with the girls' participation. She will send us the date. Also, she will create an engaging invitation to give to each recipient for her family.

#### **AAUW Del Mar College:**

In our interaction, we informed Ms. Jimenez that we partner with the AAUW student group at Del Mar College and its sponsor, Ms. Cheryl Sanders, a member of AAUW. The Del Mar College AAUW group plays a vital part in achieving a meaningful celebration. Group members plan their role in the celebration and provide gifts for the recipients. In the past a group officer has functioned as key speaker who explains the academic and emotional rewards of attending college and participating in groups. Their enthusiasm adds joy to the celebration.

#### **Principal, Dr. Tamayo:**

After our discussion, we were pleased to meet Dr. Aurelio Tamayo, the new Miller High School principal, who visited us in the Career Center. He welcomed us to the school and spoke about his goals for the students, programs, and physical campus. He talked about the importance of motivation the students, the need for higher education, and the importance of attending a college that nurtures students. He thanked us for our emphasis on Miller High School, our commitment to students, our regard for their futures, and our recognition of them. We gave Dr. Tamayo a letter that congratulates him on his leadership role and introduces our organization and its president, Kelly Gonzalez, and the Community Outreach Committee with its chairperson, Diana Reyes.

#### **Committee Members Participating:**

Ms. Jimenez noted that she looks forward to meeting with Diana Reyes and sharing additional information with all members. Members of this committee provide the refreshments for everyone in attendance. Many members of the Community Outreach Committee participated in this productive meeting: Catherine Cox, Alka Khanolkar, Deanne Purcell, Shirley Selz, Sylvia Whitworth, and Diana Cardenas.

## Book Finders

**Our next book sales is scheduled for**

**March 27-29**

**Featuring: Texana, Children's, Cooking & Vintage Books**

Volunteers are needed to help organize, clean, price, and shelf books in preparation for the sale.

For more information, contact Kristin Conlan.



## May 2025 Luncheon



**When:** May 3, 2025

**Time:** 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

**Where:** The Blue Clove Seafood Bar & Grill  
5884 Everhart Rd.

Be sure to plan to attend our May Luncheon. In addition to enjoying a delicious meal with friends and members, we will have the installation of new officers.


Each member will order individually from the menu and pay her own bill.






# AAUW **BOOK SALE**

**March 27 – 29**



Thursday – Friday: 10 – 5 pm  
Saturday: 10 – 1:30 pm



**Featured Books:**

Texana, Children's,  
Cooking & Vintage!

**\$2 & up  
special sales!**

**Shelves restocked  
daily!**




**Neyland Library.**

1230 Carmel Pkwy  
361-826-2370

**For more info:**

Kristin Conlan || 361-548-0282  
[corpuschristi-tx.aauw.net](http://corpuschristi-tx.aauw.net)



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