



Breaking through Barriers

for Women and Girls

American Association of University Women – Austin Branch

January 2010

Volume LXXVIII Number 1

January Activities

Jan. 4 – Contemporary Literature at Old Quarry BL 7 p.m. – *109 East Palace: Robert Oppenheimer and the Secret City at Los Alamos.* Discussion leader: Sue Rodi. Fern Chester (345-1102) or Dorothea Berasley (343-0370).

Jan. 8 – First Friday Book Review at Hyde Park Church of Christ, 43rd & Ave. B. 10 a.m. – *Emily Post.* Reviewed by Hester White. Hostesses: Judy Reinhart & Ramona Nance. Kay Watson (447-2883) or Natalie Balden (288-7748).

Jan. 9 - Branch meeting & lunch at Wyndham Hotel, 3401 IH 35 & Woodward St. 10 a.m. “2010-UN Year of Cultural Rapprochement.” Speaker: Tom Spencer, CEO of AAIM.

Jan. 12 - Mah-Jongg. 7 p.m. 7920 Mesa Trails Cove. Ann Berasley (837-2250) or Janie Patterson (343-3058).

Jan. 12 – Classic Book Study Group at Ralph Yarborough BL 7 p.m. *Proud Tower* by Barbara Tuchman. Discussion leader: Karen Jordahl. (Evelyn Boyer, 836-1492).

Jan 13 – Second Wednesday Bridge. 7 p.m. Call Judy Reinhart (345-5936) for more information.

TOM SPENCER TO SPEAK AT JANUARY MEETING

More than a decade ago Harvard historian Samuel P. Huntington wrote, “The underlying problem for the West is Islam, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their power. The problem for Islam ... is the West, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the universality of their culture and believe that their superior, if declining power imposes on them the obligation to extend that culture throughout the world.” Only on December 17, 2007, did the UN General Assembly declare 2010 to be the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures (resolution 62/90) and set a goal of making the rapprochement of cultures the hallmark of all policymaking at local, national, regional and international levels and to involve the greatest number of relevant stakeholders possible. Affirming that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of the dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, the Assembly also recommended that events be organized on interreligious and intercultural dialogue as well as understanding and cooperation for peace. Member states were encouraged to consider initiatives that identify areas for practical action at all levels of society to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue, tolerance, understanding, and cooperation.



In the opening days of this Year of Cultural Rapprochement, the first Branch program of not only a new year but also a new decade will consider just such an effort, the work of AAIM (Austin Area Interreligious Ministries). Our January 9 program speaker has for many years been actively engaged in developing cultural and religious understanding, and now as CEO of AAIM <<http://aaimaustin.org>>, Tom Spencer is taking a leading role in uniting faith and cultural communities to foster mutual respect in service of the common good.

Prior to joining AAIM in 2008, Tom served as a host and producer for KLRU-TV, Austin’s public television station, for more than twenty-five years. As manager and producer of local and statewide public affairs programs, nationally distributed documentaries on art and architecture, and a wide variety of special projects, he was also the primary host for the station's local programming. His work in television earned numerous awards and honors. A singular honor came in 1994 when he was appointed to a select task force by the president of PBS to reshape public affairs programming for the national system. More recently, his docu-

January Activities (continued)

Jan. 14 - Mystery Study Group at Luby's (MOPAC & Steck). 6:30 p.m. dinner; 7 p.m. discussion: Just for Fun-Amusing Sleuths (Jacqueline Girdner, Joan Hess [Arly Hanks], Conner Holt Sawyer). Pat Bennett (342-1744).

Jan. 18 - Southwest Austin Book Group with hostess & facilitator Inés Garcia, 10:30 a.m. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. RSVP or for more information: Marsha Endahl Kramer (906-2033).

Jan. 19 – Light Cuisine. 11 a.m. Hostess: Nancy Myers, 6805 Rain Creek Pkwy., RSVP 338-4335; co-hostess: Martha VanSickle (487-8307. (Veronica Johnson, 338-1254).

Jan. 20 - Creative Stitchery. Hostess: Wreatha Leonard, 261-6444; co-hostess: Dorothea Berasley. (Dorothea Berasley, 343-0370).

Jan. 21 – Culture & Cuisine with Inés Garcia, 6313 Abilene Trail. 6:30 p.m. RSVP 444-5643. (Mary Owens, 454-9339).

Jan. 26 – Mah-Jongg. 7 p.m. 7920 Mesa Trails Cove. Ann Berasley (837-2250) or Janie Patterson (343-3058).

Jan. 27 – Art Tour Group. Neill-Cochran House, 2310 San Gabriel. 10 a.m. Host: Nancy Myers (Nancy says that light refreshments will be provided). Docent: Martha Berry.

mentary *The Painted Churches of Texas: Echoes of the Homeland* won the National Educational Television Association's award for Historical Documentary of the Year (2001). Through his weekly radio program on gardening for KLBK-AM and a weekly gardening program presented by KLRU, Tom is also well known as the *Central Texas Gardener*. Among his current projects is the internationally popular website: www.soulofthegarden.com, winner of the first ever "Mouse and Trowel" award as the "Gardening Website of the Year" for 2007.

The mission of AAIM is to unite "*faith and cultural communities to foster respect, partnership and transformation in service of the common good,*" and in his CEO role Tom says that he is attempting to create a national model for interfaith dialogue and empathy that is based on the simple premise of doing good – together. As our January speaker Tom will elaborate on these efforts and suggest ways in which we as a Branch or as individuals can be partners in addressing what is perhaps the most critical issue of the 21st century—the clash of cultures.



The meeting will be at the Wyndham Hotel, 3401 IH 35, and please note that this meeting will be in the Lake Travis Room instead of the usual Lady Bird Lake Room. The menu for lunch is lemon basil grilled chicken breast with wild rice, seasonal fresh vegetables, salad, bread, dessert, and coffee or tea. The cost of the luncheon is \$20 for a timely reservation with payment made the day of the meeting; a check is preferred or you need to bring the correct change.

Dorothea will send a reminder e-mail one week before the meeting; you can simply reply to her email to make your reservation or you may call her at 343-0370. Reservations or cancellations MUST be received by 6 p.m. on the Wednesday before the Saturday meeting because Dorothea e-mails her reservations count to the Wyndham at that time.

The Branch must pay for all reservations made, so a member who does not keep her reservation will be billed for the full cost of the luncheon. If a member arrives without a reservation and expects to stay for lunch, the cost of the meal is \$30. In this situation, please check in with Dorothea (reservations) and Evelyn (treasurer) at the registration table to determine availability and to make payment; do NOT approach hotel staff directly (this is a business transaction to be handled by the treasurer).

By the 6 p.m. Wednesday deadline, Dorothea also needs to know if you are attending the program but not staying for lunch or if your luncheon reservation has any special dietary requirements such as a vegetarian meal. Seating for members attending only the meeting/program is in chairs set up separate from those at the tables for luncheon attendees. Thus, it is important to let Dorothea know that you will be attending the meeting/ program but not staying for lunch so that the hotel will know how many additional chairs to set up.

January Activities (continued)

Jan. 27 – Fourth Wednesday Bridge. 7 p.m. Call Sarah Ezell (343-8494) for more information.

Every Thursday – Bridge at the Senior Center. 9:30 a.m. Call Dorothy Ramsey (442-3841) for more information.

Looking Ahead

April 15, 2010. Income tax day. Elizabeth Newall reminds us that \$46 of our Association dues are tax deductible.

April 17, 2010. Expanding Your Horizons. 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Contact Raemar Shown, AAUW/EYH Liaison, to sign up to assist. (258-1069)

April 23-25, 2010. AAUW-Texas State Convention. Houston, Texas. (Marriott Westchase, 1900 Briarpark Dr.).

CONTACTS & COMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications

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{Newsletter deadline is 9 a.m. on the 20th of the month.}

2010 Program Dates:

January 9
February 13
March 13
April 10
May 8

STUDY GROUPS NEWS

From Judy Reinhart, Study Group Coordinator:

Over the years our study groups have come and gone with new ones added and older ones deleted. All it takes to start a new study group is a few members with an idea to sponsor it. Please keep this in mind for the August Open House at which we will showcase our study groups to our members and guests.



For example, this year we added a new literature group that meets in Southwest Austin, and sadly we have deleted a literature group. The Evening Book Review group ended with its December program.



Southwest Book Group Holiday Luncheon at Green Pastures

The Southwest Book Group has changed a couple of its meeting dates. We are growing but always have room for more if you want to read the chosen book and be prepared for a dynamic and enlightening dialogue about the characters, the story or plot, and the author. On January 18th we'll meet in the home of Inés Garcia (*Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys), and on February 15 we will meet at the home of Sylvia Garcia (*People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks). We gather at 10:30 a.m., have some light refreshments, and aim to be finished by 12 noon. In March we will resume our original plan to meet the second Monday. Please RSVP by Jan 11 for the Jan 18 meeting to Marsha Endahl Kramer (906-2033) or HughMarsha@aol.com.

Marsha Endahl Kramer

📌 Notes from Marsha Endahl Kramer for EF

"In That Moment I Knew" is a lovely annual meeting publication from AAUW National. Several of our members were recognized in it for giving generously to the Educational Foundation, and Veronica Johnson and Pam Wolfe were recognized for being Legacy Circle members as they have remembered AAUW in their wills!

I am pleased to announce that as of today the Austin Branch with the help of a number of you who made personal donations, bought raffle tickets, donated auction items, helped organize and attended our February special event (wine tasting, cheese, and chocolate), we raised \$3000 for the Educational Foundation! Many thanks to Anita Knight (who is currently serving a two-year term as AAUW-TX Vice President for EF) for her support and wise counsel. It is NOT too late to donate to this excellent cause. Contact Marsha Endahl Kramer for details: Hugh Marsha@aol.com or (512) 906-2033).

📌 A Note from Gail Simpler – LAF VP

It is never too late to make a tax-deductible donation to LAF to help balance the scales of justice for women. Make your check to AAUW Funds and note for LAF. Send it to me: Gail Simpler, 9451 Singing Quail Dr., Austin, TX 78758-6134. I will forward all contributions from Branch members to the Association Office with the appropriate paperwork for Austin Branch recognition. Please contact me at 834-9481 if you have questions. Thank you for your past and future generosity!

📌 A Note from Mary Ellen Scribner – International Relations

When I began planning the January 9 International Relations program, I intended to share insights, observations, and experiences gained during the eleven years I just spent working in Russia, China, Viet Nam, and Ghana. Then I began to think about my encounters with the world outside the U.S. in the context of what I was witnessing in the U.S. itself—the crippling bi-partisanship of our politics; the assumptions that all opinions other than one's own are wrong; the certitude that all religions other than one's own are misguided; the hatred and fear of others who aren't just like oneself frequently spawning hate crimes, radicalism,

and terrorism; and the lack of accurate information and relevant experiences that feed such attitudes. Then I read about the UN General Assembly's declaration of 2010 as an International Year of Cultural Rapprochement. Bingo! A global effort should begin at a local level and emanate outward and upward!

I have known Tom Spencer for many years, and when he spoke about his new work at AAIM, I knew that we smart, educated AAUW women needed to hear more! Please start 2010 off by attending the January program and resolving to learn, listen, and speak out for cultural rapprochement in the Austin community. Bring a friend, a neighbor, or a colleague to the program—and encourage them to join our Branch and get involved in our work on behalf of education, women, and children everywhere! See you there!

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Even though the attendance was on the low side, the fellowship and food were definitely on the high side at the holiday open house hosted by Branch past presidents at Westminster Manor on December 13!

