

JULY – AUGUST 2026

AUSTIN WOMAN'S CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Musings from Mary Ann

Dear Ladies of the Austin Woman's Club,

Thank you so much for placing your confidence in me to lead the Austin Woman's Club this coming year. I will **need** the help and support of every one of you to be successful.

Before I talk about upcoming plans and ideas, I would like to thank Anna Speir and her wonderful board. I have watched them meet challenges with grace, perseverance and dignity. We are very fortunate to have people like the 2025-2026 Board working with us.

I have thought about a couple of themes I would like to emphasize this year and being a 1,2,3 person, this is how my mind separates out my thoughts.

Themes

1. **Communication**—we must talk to one another. Ideas and thoughts must be shared. All areas impact each other. For example--Programs can help Development, Membership can help Nominating and they can all work together to help one another.
2. **Positivity**—I do not know if you are familiar with the song "Accentuate the Positive," **Let's do that**. The amazing women of this organization have achieved so much BOTH today and yesterday and I know there will be even greater achievements tomorrow.
3. **Say "Yes"**—We are all volunteers, we all have commitments, but just like the old saying on the bottom of Coke-Cola bottle, "No deposit, no return." If you don't put your energy into an organization, it will not make the progress you want to see so if someone asks you to do something, try to figure out a way to say "yes."

Now you see how 1,2 and 3 work together. Let's make the progress that we are all capable of achieving. There will be some new and exciting things coming this year, so I want to see each one of you at lunch so you can learn what they are. **Together we will also have fun!**

Fondly,

Mary Ann



Capital improvements at Chateau Bellevue are supported in part by a Heritage Preservation Grant of Austin Arts, Culture, Music, & Entertainment.

AWC Gives Back

An AWC Baby Shower!

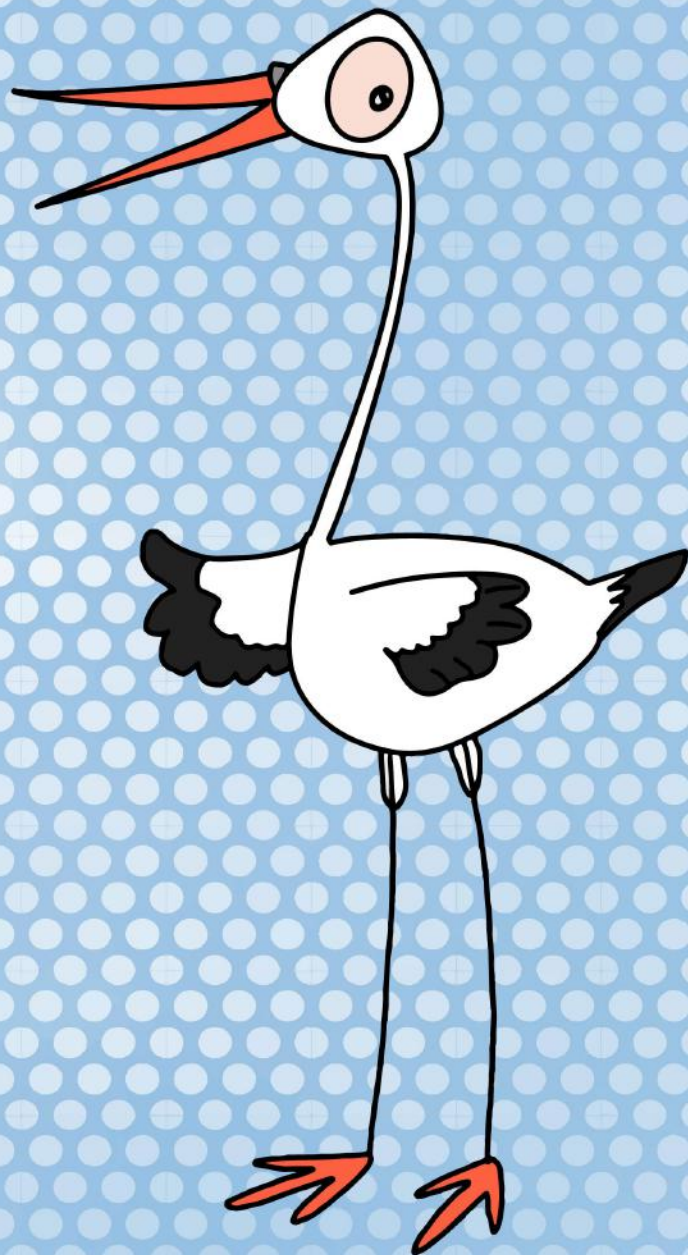
Our last Philanthropy Drive for this year will support **Any Baby Can** in the area of Nurse - Family Partnerships. Their mission is to help children meet milestones, parents achieve stability and families improve health and well-being. They provide free in-home services for children facing a scary diagnosis as well as first - time moms and parents who need extra support to take on life's challenges. Eligibility requirements are: First time pregnant moms, residents of Travis or Williamson County and are under the Federal Poverty Level.

To participate in our Austin Woman's Club Baby Shower, they have asked for the following items:

- Diapers of any size
- Wipes
- Diaper creams
- Lotions
- Baby shampoo
- Small lotions for mom
- Board books for toddlers
- Sippy cups
- Burp Cloths

Our Shower will be collecting items **June 11th, 18th and 25th**. Our items will be delivered to Any Baby Can after our meeting on June 25th.

This is a voluntary philanthropy drive and you are NOT required to donate. Questions? Please let Karen Watford know at kkwatford@aol.com!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Sheila Scott
Mary Manford

RESERVATION PROCEDURES

Reservation Procedures

- ◆ Reservations and cancellations need to be made no later than **noon on the Tuesday** before the luncheon by clicking the reservation arrow below. Cancellations made after that are non-refundable, and no-shows will be charged.
- ◆ You have the option of paying in advance online, or you can choose the "Pay at the Door" option so that you can pay by cash, check (payable to the Austin Woman's Club), or credit card at the door. A QR Code for free online credit card payments will also be available at check-in.
- ◆ For seating and dietary requests, please contact the office at office@chateauatx.com
- ◆ For event specific requests like reserving a table, tables settings, decorations, etc., please contact Maci at events@chateauatx.com.
- ◆ To-go meals (while available) at the luncheons are \$10 per plate which includes entree and sides only (no starters or desserts).

[Click to Make a Reservation](#)

JULY 2026

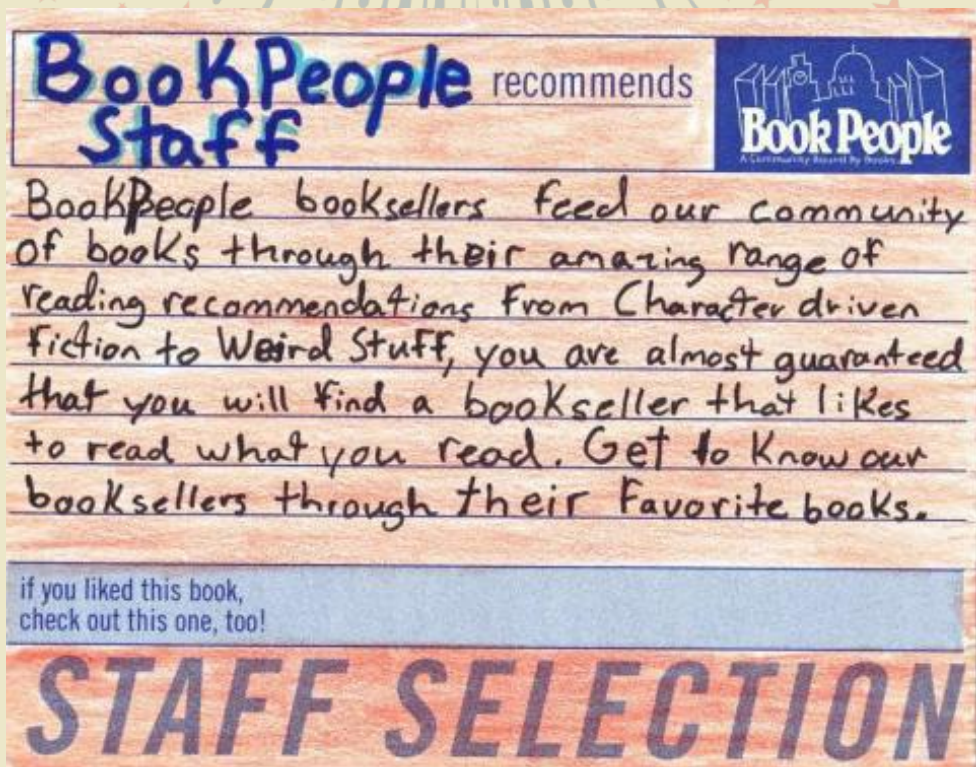
THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2026

11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Introduction by Sandra Blevins

**BookPeople is coming to share their
TOP SUMMER READS for 2026. Their
always fun and delightful staff will
provide overviews of each title and
have books on hand for purchase.**

Bring your checkbook or credit cards.



JULY 2026

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2026

11:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.



**A Midsummer in
Marfa:**
A West Texas Fairy Tale
JEREMY BRIMHALL

Austin Symphony Orchestra
Director of Education and Community Engagement
Introduction by Susan Ashworth

Yes, you read that correctly! Shakespeare, Austin Symphony, and Marfa – an intriguing combination! We are fortunate to have Jeremy Brimhall, ASO's Director of Education and Community Engagement as our presenter to discuss this highlight of ASO's 2024-2025 season. See below for further information and details.



JULY 2026

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026

11:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Introduction by Karen Haschke



Behind the Scenes - A Career in Historic Interpretations To Preserve Sites

Candace M. Volz

Candace M. Volz is a decorative arts historian with an undergraduate degree in Interior Design from the University of Texas at Austin and a graduate degree in Museum Studies from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. where she focused on 19th & early 20th C. American decorative arts. Her graduate school internships included a year with the White House that focused on cataloguing and researching the historic furnishings in the House.

Her work addresses historic interiors and artifact collections dating from the late 18th C. to the mid-20th C. She has provided professional services for private clients, house museums and National Park Service and Texas Historical Commission historic sites. She will speak about developing interpretive plans for three of those sites in Texas: the Charles and Mary Ann Goodnight Ranch State Historic Site in the Texas Panhandle, built in 1888; Magoffin Home State Historic Site in El Paso, the adobe home of merchant and early El Paso settler James Magoffin; and Casa Navarro State Historic Site in San Antonio, built in the 1850s by Jose Antonio Navarro, one of two Tejano signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence.

JULY 2026



THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2026

11:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Introduction by Patti Greene

Patti R. Clark

Executive Director of Austin Zoo

Austin Zoo is a nonprofit rescue Zoo, nestled in the Hill Country of Central Texas, dedicated to providing a safe, forever home for animals who need our help.

The mission of Austin Zoo is to assist animals in need through rescue, conservation and education.

Many of our residents come from situations involving neglect, abandonment, or abuse. Every staff member is committed to giving them the care and enrichment they deserve for a happy and healthy life.

Unlike conventional zoos, each of our animals has a unique story that reflects our dedication to their welfare. Unlike conventional zoos, each of our animals has a unique story that reflects our dedication to their welfare. As the only Zoological Association of America (ZAA) accredited zoo in the Austin area, we are committed to serving our community and connecting families with nature. We offer family-friendly events, animal rescue initiatives, and educational programs for all ages to foster a sense of wonder and appreciation for the natural world. Austin Zoo is the forever home for over 300 animals representing more than 100 species.

Patti R. Clark, born and raised in Austin, Texas, attended public schools, received a B.S. in Secondary Education and a Masters of Education in Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Texas at Austin. She has been with Austin Zoo for 23 years.

Patti joined the Board of Directors of Austin Zoo in 2003, serving as Secretary on the Board until September 2007 when she was elected Board President. Patti stepped in as Executive Director of Austin Zoo in November 2007 and continues to serve as Executive Director.

Under her direction, Austin Zoo has grown significantly in visitor counts and revenue each year. Patti was successful in securing the purchase of the land which the Zoo had under long-term lease plus additional acreage in December 2009. She found an additional 5-acre unrestricted tract 1/10 of a mile from the Zoo and secured its purchase in 2017 and 2018. The Zoo's administrative offices are located on this tract, along with a second residence which is Austin Zoo's Airbnb property. [Click here to read her entire bio.](#)

JULY 2026

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026

11:30 A.M.- 1:00 P.M.



Vicki Blachman

Travis County Master Gardener

Introduction by Andrea Stone

Vicki Blachman has been a Travis County Master Gardener for 21 years, earning 7 advanced certifications, including one in Entomology. Finally finding the perfect fit for her varied interests, Vicki became a member of Capital Area Master Naturalists in 2019. She was enlisted to be 1 of 5 Xerces Society Ambassadors in the State of Texas in 2023.

She is both a trained Habitat Steward and a Monarch Steward through the National Wildlife Federation and has completed Landscape Design certification through the Native Plant Society of Texas. She is a regular facilitator in plant knowledge for the NLCP programs.

Her own garden has been a Monarch Waystation and NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat for over 17 years and was featured on Central Texas Gardener. Drawing on her experience as a professional chef, Vicki was a Contributing Editor for Texas Gardener magazine, writing for 7 years on growing and using culinary herbs.

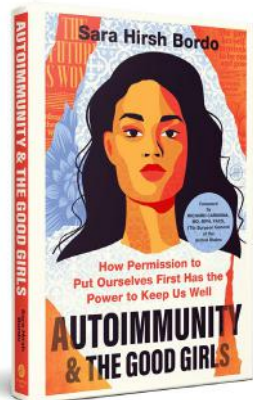


AUGUST 2026

THURSDAY
AUGUST 6, 2026

11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Book Signing from 11:00 – 11:30 and after the Program



Autoimmunity & The Good Girls

Sara Hirsh Bordo

(4th Generation AWC Family Member)

Introduction by Lizzie Velasquez

The inspirational, deeply researched wellness journey by the best-selling author, award-winning filmmaker, and founder of Women Rising®, shining a light on how too many girls are trained to self-silence and serve others—and how we can heal. For generations, women have been told to be “good” - to put others first, to silence their own voices, to neglect their own needs. But a new groundswell of evidence reveals the cost: when our lives are compromised, so are our immune systems.

This Amazon
Bestseller will be
available for
purchase through
BookPeople.



AUGUST 2026

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2026

11:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Introduction by Gayle Hight



The "Melody Maids" of Beaumont — Morals, Manners, Music!

Jerry Conn

August 13, 2026



The "Melody Maids". A remarkable singing group of high school and college women from Beaumont, Texas, who performed at U.S. military bases around the world from 1942 to 1972. The group was founded and directed for thirty years by Eloise Milam, an equally remarkable junior high school music teacher whose vision and dedication shaped the ensemble from its earliest days.

Spanning three decades of American conflict — from World War II and Korea through Vietnam — over 1500 Melody Maids brought music, morale, and a touch of home to U.S. servicemen and women stationed far from their families. Their repertoire drew from Broadway, Hollywood, and the popular songs of the era, and many performances closed on a note of warmth and blessing with the beloved hymn "May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You."

One of Jerry Conn's closest friends growing up in Beaumont was Bucky, the son of Eloise Milam — a friendship that began when the two were just seven years old. In 1953, the boys joined the Melody Maids on tour to U.S. military bases across California and Hawaii. Two years later, in the summer of 1955, they accompanied the group on an ambitious circuit through Newfoundland, Iceland, Greenland, Baffin Island, and Labrador.

Jerry earned his BS in Journalism and Master's in Communication from the University of Texas. His professional career spans the full breadth of the field — from the trenches of local newspapers and the Associated Press to Texas political public relations and advertising, where he worked with candidates across the aisle. He also served as a journalism instructor at UT Austin and a speech instructor at Austin Community College.

Today, Jerry brings together his academic background and a lifelong love of cinema, developing and presenting courses on movie musicals for UT audiences "of a certain age".

AUGUST 2026

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2026

11:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Introduction by Karen Haschke

All You Want to Know About Sports Officiating But Were Afraid to Ask!

Bill Padgett

**RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU ARE
NOT SURE HOW TO CORRECTLY
CALL INTERFERENCE AND HELMET
TO HELMET CALLS!!!**



Come join our own **Bill Padgett** to hear lots of great humorous stories about his experiences with both college baseball and football, as well as Texas high school and youth league level, plus a couple of years with youth soccer. There will be 2 interesting & short videos, plus lots of Q&A.

Bill coached at Manchaca Optimist youth baseball from 1972 until his youngest child reached Pony League age in 1988. At that time the league lost its umpire group to a change in Austin youth league administration and the father of a child in the league, who was nationally known as a sports official, helped train a group of former coaches to work "kid ball" games locally. After 2 years, by default he inherited the task of training & scheduling for several leagues in the southwest Austin area and also joined SBUA (Southwest Baseball Umpires Association) for high school and college baseball in Texas. Several new friends also were football officials, and he was "recruited" a couple later to join SFOA (Southwest Football Officials Association), beginning 15 years of officiating at the high school level. He observed a very interesting evolution of the profession during those years, which he will share with you.

AUGUST 2026

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2026

11:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Introduction by Patti Greene



About The Contemporary Austin

The Contemporary Austin is the city's leading contemporary art museum, presenting exhibitions, commissions, and programs that connect artists and audiences through meaningful, thought-provoking experiences. With two unique sites—the Jones Center downtown and Laguna Gloria on the shores of Lake Austin—the museum brings art and place together in ways that inspire creativity, conversation, and community. Each year, TCA welcomes more than 70,000 visitors and engages thousands of students, families, and educators through its exhibitions and education programs.

Our speaker, **Hillary Welde**, is the Director of Individual Giving at The Contemporary Austin. Her work focuses on building meaningful relationships with supporters and creating engaging experiences—including national and international travel—that deepen connection to the museum's mission and community. TCA offers a membership program that provides a dynamic way to engage more deeply with the museum. Benefits include free admission, early access to exhibitions, invitations to exclusive events and behind-the-scenes experiences, and discounts on programs and classes.

A hallmark of Contemporary Austin is access to curated national and international travel experiences. These trips offer insider access to the art world—private collection visits, artist studio tours, museum experiences, and cultural moments—often led by museum leadership. Designed to be both enriching and convivial, they bring upper-level members together around a shared passion for contemporary art in extraordinary settings. Come out and meet Hillary and learn about this unique Austin treasure.

Membership Moment

The Gift of Sponsorship

One of the greatest strengths of the Austin Woman's Club has always been the friendships, encouragement, and sense of belonging shared among our members. As we welcome new women into our club, each of us can help continue that tradition through sponsorship.

Sponsoring a prospective member is more than simply signing a form — it is extending a hand of friendship and helping someone discover the warmth, purpose, and community that make our club so special. Many of us first joined because someone kindly invited us, introduced us around the room, or made us feel at home. Those thoughtful gestures often become the beginning of lasting friendships.

If you know a woman who would enjoy fellowship, volunteer service, social activities, and of course, phenomenal weekly programs and luncheons, we encourage you to consider sponsoring her for membership. New members bring fresh ideas, energy, talents, and perspectives that help our club continue to flourish for years to come.

A personal invitation can make all the difference. Whether it is inviting a friend to attend an event, sharing your own positive experiences, or simply encouraging someone to learn more about the club, your outreach matters.

Thank you to all our members who continue to support and strengthen the Austin Woman's Club through your friendship, hospitality, and sponsorship of new members. Together, we keep our wonderful tradition growing. A special congratulations and thank you go to Anne Yeakel, Sandy Cangelosi, Kelly Hyten, Karen Watford and Karen Haschke for their recent sponsorships. – Debbie Cochran

Website Tidbit – Attention All 2026-2027 Committee Members!

In our AWC Member Portal, we have a list of all our committees and their members. To keep this up to date with the 2026-2027 committees, please let me know if you will be serving on a committee(s), and if so, which ones, so I can update the website accordingly! You can email me at communications@austinwomensclub.com.