



University Woman Texas!



Our Mission: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.

Our Value Promise: By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

Changes are underway at AAUW Texas

By Ann Berasley

When you think of change, what is your first reaction? Does the idea of change invigorate you or make you feel drained? If we are honest with ourselves, the answer is often both.

A little over a year ago, I had the opportunity to make a significant career change. Accepting a new opportunity was exciting, but leaving a job I knew how to do well was a little scary. I have grown and learned many new things. At the same time, I have also faced some challenges and come home tired at the end of some long days. Ultimately, I am glad I made the change.

Many of you have asked AAUW Texas to make changes to the way we operate and communicate to better meet your needs, in effect changing the way we do our jobs. Although other articles in this issue provide more detail, here are some of the highlights of the changes being made at the state level.

Like a career change, this process is both exciting and challenging for both the board of directors and for members. Our goal is that at the end of the biennium you will agree that you are glad we made the changes.

- The July 2009 leadership conference will be replaced with a leadership conference

call on the weekend of **July 25-26**. Focus of the conference call will be changes coming out of the St. Louis Convention and what it means for AAUW Texas and Texas branches. By using a conference call rather than a face-to-face meeting, every branch should be able to participate.

- In May, two officer job training events will be held in the Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston areas. We do not have the resources to bring training to every branch, but we are trying a new approach to bring officer training to you before the start of the new AAUW year.
- AAUW Texas has been recognizing branches with the STAR Award. With the changing focus at the Association we will recognize branches this biennium using the PEARL Award.
- This issue of *UWT!* is not being mailed, but is available on the website. This was one way to keep within our budget at the current dues rate. If you signed up for AAUW Texas email, you should have received a notification that this issue was on the website. If you or your branch members have not signed up, please do so today!

Winter 2009

Volume 63, Issue 2

Inside This Issue

1. **President's Message**
2. **Orange Branch's 3 Hurricanes Ann Richards Fellowship set**
3. **LAF Updates**
Branch Training in Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston
Tell your branch story with PEARLS
4. **'Breaking through Barriers' at the St. Louis Convention, plus Registration Fees**
5. **More Convention details**
General breaks 'Brass Ceiling'
6. **AAUW's 2008 Annual Report Leadership Conference Call Board Meeting Highlights**
7. **Board of Directors Roster**
Pregnancy Discrimination Act
8. **AAUW plans Scholarship Clearinghouse**
AAUW partners with Barnes & Noble



AAUW Texas' Board of Directors Meeting in Abilene in November included these members, l to r, Front row: Marietta Hostak, Priscilla Mowinkle, Margaret Bentley, Ann Berasley, and Patricia Ross. Back Row: Dusky Wells, Margi Poole, Celina Fennell, Anita Knight, Elaine Wells, Elizabeth Newell, Janet Peavler, Shirley Breeze (Regional Rep), Pam Wolfe, Kathy Anton and not pictured, Jeannie Best; the photographer. See highlights about the board meeting on page 6.

Orange AAUW Branch Rebounds from:

Three Hurricanes in Three Years

By Anne Hardy Payne, Orange Branch President

"Storm Surge" -- These two words became part of the Orange AAUW Branch members' vocabulary on September 13, 2008, as the horrific Hurricane Ike ravaged through the Golden Triangle and the entire southeastern Texas coastline.

Only 13 days previously, Hurricane Gustaf proved a trial-run, as most of the same residents evacuated to higher ground, only to see Gustaf bypass us. Three years ago, the harsh winds of Hurricane Rita (only four weeks after Katrina) ripped through the same Golden Triangle area.

Somehow, the AAUW sisters of Orange County bonded and comforted each other. Even a day after the Category 1 Hurricane Humberto hit our area by surprise in September 2007, we managed to stage our annual membership tea.

We, in the Orange branch, have shared thousands of dollars in such destruction as damaged roofs, trees through homes, uprooted trees, flattened fences and gates, toppled chimneys and/or downed mailboxes, flooded homes and vehicles, warped flooring, ruined sheetrock, soggy carpeting, air conditioning/heating and/or electrical/plumbing problems, water leakage in windows and doors, great emotional stress, and even fires! Yes, one of our local members suffered a home devastated by fire the day after Hurricane Ike due to an electrical mishap.

What made Hurricane Ike so horrific was the storm surge. At least one-third to one-half of Orange's 13 square-mile city was under six feet of water. Storm surge was as high as 15 feet in some places, bursting levees and flooding entire neighborhoods. Front yards were swallowed by floodwaters, highways were submerged, and homes were filled with four to eight feet of water. Orange (population 15,000) found its citizens being rescued off the tops of homes and buildings, as well as from attics, by helicopters. Meanwhile, boats traveled Orange streets instead of vehicles, assisting with rescues.

Dr. Mary Behnke, AAUW member and retired Lamar

State College-Orange professor, saw her home filled with four feet of water, losing at least half of their cherished books. The Behnkes are now living in a trailer while their home is refurbished.

Former AAUW branch treasurer Elaine Martin, discovered her home filled with water, forcing her and her husband, recently retired Orange County Red Cross Director Robert Martin, to move several hundred miles away to the Tyler, Texas, vicinity.

Yet another Orange AAUW member (and former Cody, Wyoming, member), Dr. Sarah Boehme, the director of Orange's renowned Stark Museum, sustained flooding in her sunken living room, ruining everything in the room.

Member Doris Miller saw her magnificent and luxurious sailboat left in a rubble at nearby Pleasure Island, while our Janis Beach suffered the loss of her home to fire the day following Ike. Several members owned beach houses in nearby Crystal Beach and on Bolivar Island, now just sticks of debris.

Orange's neighboring town of Bridge City (population 8,000), only about six miles away, suffered so much damage from the storm surge that only 14 of the 3,400 homes were deemed "livable" by FEMA and various insurance agencies.

News media from across the country, such as CNN's Anderson Cooper wearing waist-high wader boots, showed viewers home-after-home and business-after-business filled with four to eight feet of water.

Two of our Bridge City members, Virginia Watson and Jerrilyn Miller, are now living in FEMA trailers due to the complete destruction of their homes, which are being rebuilt.

For several weeks after Hurricane Ike hit, water moccasins and alligators made themselves visible all over the area, along with the remains of salt-water life, such as crabs, shrimp, and even squid. Unfortunately, the venomous snakes seemed to often take refuge in the drywalls and flooring of flooded properties.

The Orange Post Office only recently opened for full service. The County Courthouse, the local community theater, and the police and fire departments are still not up and running due to the enormous storm surge.

FEMA trailers are all over the area as a means of temporarily coping. And, cope we will as the women of the Orange County AAUW Branch rise like a Phoenix!

We have now had three book reviews and a new member tea since late October, so we are attempting to reconnect with one another. We even have six new members!

Orange AAUW survived another catastrophic hurricane. We are a rock!



The dreaded circular motion of a hurricane forms over the Gulf of Mexico and heads toward the Texas coast.

Ann Richards' American Fellowship now official



Ann Richards, painting by James Tennyson, 1996. Photograph of Accession #1995.6, State Preservation Board, Austin, Texas

Governor Ann Richards

Photo courtesy of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission

By Anita Knight, Education Foundation VP

Remember Ann Richards' Fellowship Fund # 4324 when you designate contributions to AAUW Educational Foundation!

A formal letter was sent to all Texas branch EF contacts and other friends of LAF and Ann Richards.

Remember that Ann Richards represented and teacher, a political active-lived much of AAUW's mission; she was a

teacher, a political activist, a campaigner, a mentor, an historic speaker, and the 45th Governor of Texas from 1991-1995. Although officially she was the second Texas woman governor, Richards is considered the first woman elected to that office in her own right.

Twice-elected Miriam "Ma" Ferguson is often discounted as having been a proxy for impeached governor James E. "Pa" Ferguson, her husband.