

# South Austin AARP

## Chapter 2426

Website: [www.southaustinaarp.org](http://www.southaustinaarp.org)

June 2020

### Message from the President

*Crespin Guzman*

Greetings and well wishes to all for a safe and healthy summer about to begin! The Board met last week via Zoom and it was a great experience because we could see each other and carry on as if we were meeting in person. To say that we had fun is an understatement and as such the Board will continue to meet on the regular monthly scheduled dates for the membership meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays. All members are welcome to join the meeting and specific individuals like Committee Chairs with certain chapter responsibilities will be invited in order to have more meaningful discussions about topics on the proposed agenda. We anticipate that as word gets around more about the Zoom Board meetings we will have more non-Board members in attendance. Of course, nothing can totally replace our face to face engagements as those we have had in the past but which unfortunately we may not be able to enjoy again anytime soon.

However, on a brighter note, we do plan to stay connected with our membership in more ways than just the newsletter and we look forward to our Committee Chairs having a larger and more active role in creating those connections that allow us to reach out to the membership more often. So welcome to the Digital World of your South Austin AARP Chapter 2426!

We welcome and look forward to your heightened interest at whatever level of intensity you wish to pursue, even if it is just out of curiosity!

### Travel

Members who signed up for the April day trip to San Antonio will be refunded their money. The checks will be mailed about the second week in June.

The June newsletter is being sent to all who paid their dues in 2019 or 2020 but the July newsletter will be emailed or mailed only those who have paid their 2020 dues.

If you are not sure whether you have paid your dues, you may email, Bill Nicholson, [wr.nicholson@outlook.com](mailto:wr.nicholson@outlook.com). If you do not have email, call Bill at 512-481-8464,

### Volunteering in the Time of a Pandemic

*Ed Gonzales*

As we are all aware, the social distancing, quarantine and physical isolation restrictions for helping in the prevention of the spread of the deadly Covid-19 virus have dramatically affected our volunteering capabilities. Nonetheless, several of our chapter members have found new and different ways to try to maintain an active and robust Community Service Outreach Program. For example, some have sewn protective masks for health care workers, others have continued to knit blankets for the homeless. There are also several other ways to volunteer that do not entail close contact with others. Examples of areas sorely needed during this difficult time are:

1. Become a Virtual Companion to Lonely Seniors  
Seniors are hit especially hard by pandemics like the Corona virus. Because they are more at risk, seniors are hit especially hard by pandemics. Because they are more at risk for complications than other age groups, many are self-isolating. A pandemic is a frightening time for everyone, and being a senior alone can make it even scarier and more difficult. Fortunately, you can volunteer from home and become a virtual companion to a senior who might be lonely.

2. Staff a Crisis Center Remotely  
Times of isolation can cause a spike in crisis hotline calls and texts, and you can help by volunteering to staff a

crisis hotline. Some people just need to know they aren't alone, and you can help.

### 3. Donate Your Time as a Virtual Student Mentor

If you have a background in education or just enjoy working with kids, a pandemic offers a unique opportunity to be of service to the next generation. During a pandemic, many kids are learning from home, and most parents are not trained as teachers or experienced in home schooling. You can add a consistent and helpful perspective to kids' education by donating your time.

### 4. Give Blood While Maintaining Social Distancing

Blood Banks urgently needs blood, especially during a pandemic when blood drives are often cancelled. These organizations have put social distancing practices in place to protect donors, such as spacing beds far apart, taking temperatures of donors, and sanitizing patient-contact surfaces.

***Since our Chapter has not had and do not anticipate having our monthly general meetings in the near future, our members have not had to opportunity to submit their volunteer hours. Please feel free to email Ed Gonzales [Edgonzales7@gmail.com](mailto:Edgonzales7@gmail.com). any hours that you have accrued while participating in various projects and activities. The form is on the last page of the newsletter. I will be glad to quantify and coordinate those hours as usual and produce our yearly census submittal to the National Office of the AARP, which in turn clearly demonstrates that Chapter 2426 truly embodies the vision and mission of AARP, which is "To Serve, Not to Be Served".***

This is available to seniors regardless of income level. Clients of SASAC can receive a week's supply of frozen lunches. Curbside pickup is every Monday at 10:00 a.m.

**The Austin Public Library** is closed but digital services are available.

Your public library at your fingertips. Hoopladigital.com is available to you free of charge if you have an Austin Public Library card.

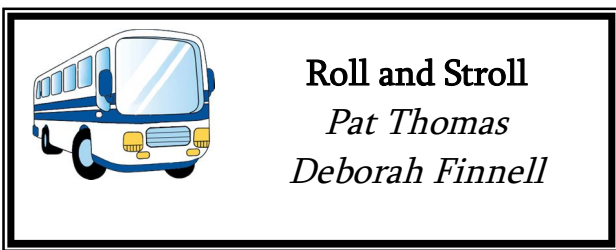
It is a digital media service offered by your local public library that allows you to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks, comics and TV shows to enjoy on your computer, tablet, or phone. Titles can be streamed immediately or downloaded to phones or tablets for offline enjoyment later. Hundreds of thousands of titles to choose from. To learn more watch the video <https://youtu.be/eHGo0Yk07W8>

**The Austin History Center** is closed but digital services are available.

Learn about Austin history via their YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmKoOUpsn4H0mUclGAqFtCQ>

Exploring the collections available at the history center will keep you entertained for many hours. <http://library.austintexas.gov/ahc/online-collections-373164>

**MEMORIES FROM THE PAST.** CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE LOCATION OF EACH OF THESE ROLL AND STROLL EVENTS? We will stroll again when we determine that it is safe to do so. Fresh air is good for you so take a walk in your neighborhood. Develop an attitude of gratitude for the friends that support and surround you.



A little laughter, love and wisdom from the Roll & Stroll Committee.

### **South Austin Senior Activity Center and Meals on Wheels**

Although all local Senior Centers are temporarily closed due to the pandemic, they still provide helpful information via their monthly newsletter. We look forward to the day when our South Austin Senior Activity Center reopens. We wish to remind you that they offer weekly curbside meal distribution at SASAC.



HUMOR from Pat and Deborah

*Two old friends Mary and Janet went to the movies. A few minutes after it started, Mary heard Janet rustling around and she seemed to be searching on the floor under her seat. "What are you doing?" asked Mary. Janet replied "I had a caramel in my mouth and it dropped out. I can't find it." Mary told her to forget it because it would be too dirty by now. "But I've got to", said Janet, "my teeth are in it!"*

## Vote By Mail In Texas Here's How To Do It.

The Texas Secretary of State says you must meet one of the following criteria to be eligible for a mail-in ballot:

- you are 65 years or older;
- you are disabled;
- you will be out of the county on Election Day and during the period for early voting by personal appearance; or
- you are confined in jail, but otherwise eligible.

If you meet one of these conditions, you can apply for a mail-in ballot.

There are currently decisions being made as to whether everyone should be able to vote by mail.

### How do I apply for a mail-in ballot?

Go to <https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/forms/5-15f.pdf> to print the application, fill it out completely and mail to your county elections administrator, County Clerk Dana DeBeauvoir, P.O. Box 149325, Austin, Texas 78714-9325r.

If someone helps you fill it out, sign it or mail it, that person must complete Section 11, which requires information and a signature about that person.

## Health

Information from Center for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>

### Steps you can take

If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 because of your age or because you have a serious long-term health problem, it is extra important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of getting sick with the disease.

- **Stay home if possible.**
- **Wash your hands** often.
- **Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others** (stay 6 feet away, which is about two arm lengths).

- **Keep away from** people who are sick.
- **Stock up on supplies.**
- **Clean and disinfect** frequently touched services.
- **Avoid all cruise travel** and non-essential air travel.
- **Call your healthcare professional if you have concerns** about COVID-19 and your underlying condition or if you are sick.

### Coping with stress

**Older people and people of any age who have serious underlying health conditions** are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. **People who may have issues getting assistance** if they become ill, like those experiencing homelessness or people with disabilities are also at increased risk from COVID-19.

These conditions and situations may result in [increased stress](#) during this pandemic. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions.

Things you can do to support yourself:

- **Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news** stories and social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- **Take care of your body.** Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- **Make time to unwind.** Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- **Connect with others.** Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- **Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way** of your daily activities for several days in a row.
- **If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed** with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others call 911 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746. (TTY 1-800-846-8517)

### Have a plan for if you get sick

- **Know how to stay in touch with others by phone or email.** You may need to ask for help from friends, family, neighbors, and community health workers if you become sick.
- **Determine who can care for you** if your caregiver gets sick.

- **Contact your healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra necessary medications** to have on hand in case there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community and you need to stay home for a prolonged period of time.
- If you cannot get extra medications, consider using **mail-order for medications**.
- **Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies** (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.
- **Have enough household items and groceries** on hand so that you will be prepared to stay at home.
- **Consider ways of getting medications and food brought to your house** through family, social, or commercial networks.
- **Have a plan for someone to care for your pets** during your illness.



**Ray Vaughn**

*By Mary Ragland*

South Austin AARP Chapter 2426 members were saddened to hear of the death of long-time member and leader Ray Vaughn on April 23, 2020.

In recent years, we knew Ray as the faithful chapter member who loved to tell very corny jokes at meetings. Sometimes he had a hard time getting to the punch line of his jokes because he was laughing so hard.

But those of us who are long-time members of the chapter knew Ray as a steady and hard-working leader. He was retired from the Texas Rehabilitation Commission and brought his administrative expertise to guide our chapter toward our current vibrant and active status.

Ray first served as co-vice president in 2000 when meetings were held in a small room at SASAC, and we had 60 members. He was elected chapter president in 2001 and served 2 years. Under his leadership the chapter was very active, engaging in some community service activity more than every other month each year.

During those years the state AARP Office gave awards to chapters that had conducted an extensive list of activities designed to be of service to the community and further the goals of AARP. In 2001 and 2002 Chapter 2426 received the gold award, the next-highest award given. For many years, Ray published a monthly chapter newsletter. He literally cut and pasted the articles, xeroxed them, and mailed at his own expense.

He stepped down to vice president in 2003, but again accepted the position of president in 2004 and 2005. The chapter continued to grow and provide service to the community during those years. In fact, the chapter earned the AARP state office's highest award, the platinum, starting in 2004, and continuing until awards were no longer given in 2008. Ray was adept at recruiting members to engage in service activities. At least once at every meeting we would hear him state the AARP motto: "To serve, not to be served." After his terms as president ended, Ray continued to serve on the chapter board for several years.

Ray also was a leader with the Austin Area Community Team, a group consisting of the leadership teams of the 5 Austin Area AARP Chapters. This group developed and delivered Chapter Leadership Orientation training for officers of the chapters each year. The team organized and provided AARP Day, a large community service activity for seniors in the city of Austin providing speakers and information to attendees.

Ray was instrumental in making our chapter what it is today. We all benefit from his adoption of the AARP motto: "To serve, not to be served."

## Future Programs

*Randy Hsi*

Though our meetings are put on hold for a while, programs are being planned.

Project connect is the name of Cap Metro's new transit plan. We were originally scheduled to have Cap Metro present their plan to our members in the March meeting. It may be scheduled when we meet again.

Another program for future presentation has been created by Randy Hsi. The focus of the program is on managing the cost of medications through Medicare. In 2017, medications accounted for \$100 billion dollars or 14% of Medicare spending. The average senior takes 4 to 5 prescriptions with total costs running in the thousands. On a fixed income, some seniors are not



able to afford their medications, end up not taking them, and their chronic conditions progress. Find out about ways to reduce the cost of prescriptions including Medicare Part D drug plans, low income subsidies, Medicare Advantage plans with prescription drugs, medical providers, drug discount cards, and drug manufacturers and foundations.

**Laura Dutton, Chairman of the health committee reports that** the committee is planning on having Neurologist, Dr. Bertelson, speak to our group on dementia and how the brain ages. They are also planning a physical therapist presentation and a speaker who can discuss the upcoming trends for senior living options in Austin.

Cap Metro MetroAccess service provides transportation for clients whose disabilities or medical conditions prevent them from using public transit. Many of them are in fragile health, and it's important they are able to stay at home to protect their health and safety, and not worry about how they will get basic necessities. This partnership with H-E-B and the Central Texas Food Bank will provide Help-at-Home Kits to our MetroAccess clients free of charge. The kits will include shelf-stable items delivered to a customer's doorstep using our MetroAccess vehicles.

Visit this website for more information:  
<https://www.capmetro.org/home-delivery/>

## 2020 Membership Dues

*Bill Nicholson*

Chapter 2426 fiscal year is January through December. To be considered an active member of Chapter 2426 you are required to pay 2020 yearly dues. The 2019-2020 Membership Roster lists 241 members. The number includes 13 who are dues exempt members since they are 85 years or older. There are 86 members who have yet to pay the calendar year 2020 dues of \$10. Since the chapter is not holding monthly meetings at this time because of COVID-19, dues owed can be mailed to the Treasurer Bill Nicholson, 12512 Gun Metal Dr., Austin, Texas 78739. Make the check out to AARP Chapter 2426. Please include the membership form which is on the last page of the newsletter.

Remember if you are 85 or older, you are exempt from paying the yearly dues but you must send in the form to be included on the membership rolls.

## Chapter 2426 Treasurer's Report

*Bill Nicholson*

Checking account	\$ 3,198.77
Travel checking account	\$ 376.73
Savings account	\$ 25.00

## 2020 Officers

*And Committee Chairs*

### Officers

President:	Crespin Guzman	737-222-8155
Vice President	Nancy Crowther	512-808-7486
Secretary:	Ed Gonzales	512-444-3335
Assistant Secretary:	Marilyn Totten	512-280-8030
Treasurer:	Bill Nicholson	512-481-8464
Assistant Treasurer:	Rosie Perez	512-440-7050
Board of Directors (in addition to officers):		
Wanda Hasley 512-280-9276 and Marie Martinez 512-276-4771		

### Committee Chairs

Community Service:	Pat Thomas	512-441-1485
	Deborah Fennell	512-282-9931
Greeters:	Marilyn Totten	512-280-8030
Health:	Laura Dutton	512-740-9370
Hospitality:	Connie Flores	512-536-0694
Legislative:	Debbie Galloway	512-217-1566
Membership:	Joann Cepero	773-710-2053
Newsletter Editor And Web Manager:	Diane McGowan	512-923-3218
Program:	Randy His	512-663-8196
Phone Committee Chair:	Elaine Benton	512-799-2224
	Kathryn Stone	512-441-6038
Sunshine:	Mario Macaluso	512-432-5255
Travel		

## Hospitality

*Connie Flores*

The hospitality committee, Connie Flores, Loni King, and Helena Hedrick have been keeping in touch by calling each other just to see what we have been doing to pass time away. Helena has been gardening and taking care of husband and puppy. Loni calls friends and family and picks up delicious meals at SASAC. Connie has been sewing blankets for 2 great grandnephews and 1 great grandniece and putting photos in photo albums. We are thinking of everyone and just taking one day at a time. Take care everyone and stay safe and well.

**CIVIC AND/OR COMMUNITY SERVICE BY  
SOUTH AUSTIN AARP CHAPTER 2426 VOLUNTEERS  
PLEASE EMAIL THIS INFORMATION TO ED GONZALES**

**Edgonzales7@gmail.com. If you do not have email,**

**Mail the form to: Ed Gonzales, 710 Kinney Avenue, Austin, TX 78704**

*Note: You do not have to email the form. You may list the category and the hours for that category and the total number of hours.*

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

Category	Hours	Category	Hours
AARP Annual Day of Service		Fundraising for Community Service	
AARP Driver Safety Program		Health & Wellness	
AARP Tax Aide		Long-term Care/Nursing Home Support	
Hunger		Independent Living/ In Home Care Giving/Home Repairs	
<b>Advocacy/Legislation/Information/Referral Services</b>		Independent Living: Transportation Services	
<b>Education/Scholarships or other</b>		All Other Volunteer Areas	
Subtotal		Subtotal	
<b>Total Volunteer Hours</b>			

**South Austin Chapter 2426  
Membership Renewal 2020**

**PLEASE PRINT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: Please Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are \$10.00 per individual. Remember if you are 85 or older, you are exempt from paying the yearly dues but you must send in the form to be included on the membership rolls.

Checks should be made payable to: South Austin AARP Chapter 2426. Mail this application and payment to : South Austin AARP Chapter 2426 Bill Nicholson 12512 Gun Metal Drive Austin, TX 78739

Please check any committee(s) on which you are interested in serving .

\_\_\_\_\_ Program \_\_\_\_\_ Membership \_\_\_\_\_ Hospitality/Welcoming \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sunshine \_\_\_\_\_ Nominating \_\_\_\_\_ Legislative \_\_\_\_\_ Community Service  
\_\_\_\_\_ Health Care \_\_\_\_\_ Public Relations \_\_\_\_\_ Travel \_\_\_\_\_ Ad Hoc