

South Austin AARP

Chapter 2426

Website: www.southaustinaarp.org

January 2021

Wednesday
January 20, 1:00 p.m.
Texas 2021 Legislative Session
Kathy Green

Kathy will provide an overview of the Texas 2021 Legislative Session, the legislative agenda for AARP Texas, and information and tools available to be an AARP advocate during the session.

Kathy Green is the Director of Outreach and Advocacy, State and Federal, for AARP Texas. In that role, Kathy oversees the state and federal advocacy team and agenda for the Texas state office. Previous to AARP Texas, Kathy served as Texas State Director for **No Kid Hungry** and as Advocacy and Public Policy Director for **Central Texas Food Bank**. Kathy's background encompasses 28 years of public policy experience as a legislative staffer, public policy advisor, and lobbyist. She holds a B.A. in Government from the University of Texas at Austin. Kathy is active in the Austin community, as a member of the Austin Library Foundation board, the Women's Symphony League, and board member of Open Door, a homeless outreach ministry of University United Methodist Church. She is also a graduate of Leadership Austin.

Volunteer Hours

Ed Gonzales

Total for 2020 : 5896 Hours

Total for 2019 : 7116 Hours

Please turn in your volunteer hours. The form is at the end of the newsletter and may be emailed or mailed.

CHAPTER 2426 MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR YEAR 2021 ARE DUE

The annual dues remain at \$10.00 for the year 2021.

Payment before March 31 helps the Board of Directors and Chairs of the Committees manage the finance needs during these coronavirus times. As of now, 42 of the 161 members listed on the Chapter Roster have paid their 2021 dues. Also, there are 15 members who are exempt from dues because of being 85 years or older. So, the Roster lists 176 members.

The Treasurer's Report in this Newsletter has the mailing address to where the dues are to be sent along with a Membership Renewal form.

Legislative

Mary Ragland

AARP Fights for Older Texas During Virtual Lobby Week

For the second time this year, AARP Texas participated in a nationwide virtual lobby week, engaging congressional leaders on an array of pressing issues older Americans face. "We want to be sure as (lawmakers) go into these negotiations, they have a clear understanding of what the needs of the 50-plus from Texas are," said Charles Cascio, an AARP Texas associate state director of outreach and advocacy.

In a [Texas Bullhorn conversation](#) with AARP Texas Director Tina Tran, Cascio outlined this year's policy priorities, including the nursing home crisis, food insecurity, Social Security and more.

Nursing Homes

“One of the great things the AARP national office did was launch a [nursing homes dashboard](#) that helps track information in all 50 states on how nursing homes are faring on testing, PPE, infections,” said Cascio. He said the idea is to inform the public and policymakers about where needs exist.

Action is needed: In nursing homes nationwide, COVID-19 has claimed more than 100,000 lives of residents and staff — with more than 5,700 in Texas facilities as of early December.

“What Congress can do is ensure that the money that is directed to these facilities is used specifically for health and safety measures,” said Cascio. He also noted that AARP Texas is pushing for Congress to reject blanket immunity for long-term care facilities related to COVID-19.

Food Insecurity

Texas food banks face severe shortages in the upcoming months -- a dire situation significant to older residents, as many live on fixed incomes, live alone or have limited financial resources to pay for necessities.

“We always say that people struggling to put food on the table is not a political issue,” stressed Cascio. “It’s a daily reality.”

AARP Texas is pushing Congress to bolster the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), a vital lifeline that feeds 1.4 million Texas households, by temporarily increasing its maximum benefit and the minimum monthly benefit.

Social Security

Due to the pandemic’s economic fallout, the average wage level for 2020 is expected to fall. Because Social Security uses the wage index from the year a worker turns 60 to adjust their past wages to today’s standard of living, the average age 60 worker could lose up to \$45,000 of retirement benefits over 20 years.

“Our ask of Congress is to prevent this Social Security COVID cut and hold the beneficiaries harmless from a dramatic drop of the 2020 average wage index,” said Cascio.

Budget Shortfall

Texas is facing a colossal \$27 billion budget shortfall, which could lead to cuts to vital programs and essential resources for older families.

“We want to be sure that Congress considers additional state and local aid that is crucial for the state’s economic recovery,” said Cascio.

Source: <https://states.aarp.org/texas/aarp-fighting-for-older-texans-during-virtual-lobby-week>

December Holiday Meeting

Thank you to Nancy Crowther for leading us in a holiday celebration. We watched a portion of Miracle on 34th Street, sang along with some musical video and shared holiday greetings. It was nice to share this time together !

If you would like to see the videos, please go to the website www.southaustinaarp.org, and click on the programs tab.

Message from the President

Crespin Guzman

I certainly hope that each one of you had a great Christmas and the happiest New Year possible under all our circumstances and environment in the community. We found that being grateful for all our blessings upon our family was tremendously satisfying. **Now we resolve to improve upon that state of affairs as we take on 2021!**

Bring on the vaccines and let’s get everyone to take care of themselves and their families. As I said last month, the light at the end of the tunnel is getting clearer by the day so there is plenty to be hopeful about for 2021!

As for our Chapter, I am very thankful for all the work of our Board of Directors and our Committee Chairs to get us started on a continued track of providing educational and informative topics for our regular Membership meeting coming up on January 20th. I recommend you read this newsletter completely so you can be informed and then get excited and motivated to help improve our offerings to our membership. **There is still work to be done in our outreach and recognition activities and I will continue to stress the need for that type of engagement!**

The Board will meet on Thursday, January 14th at 10am to discuss our schedule of meetings for 2021 which will also include a discussion of topical ideas for program presentations. Having said that, if you

have any ideas for programs please forward them to Randy Hsi, Program Committee Chair or Nancy Crowther, Vice President or me. Just as an FYI, we want to plan a social event for July and December in the spirit of past years' efforts but under our "new normal" requirements, which we can only speculate about it this time.

Looking forward to a great year with you all; thank you for your support of our Chapter's activities. Stay safe and consider getting your vaccination to ensure it.

Travel
Mario Macaluso

Hi Fellow-Travelers

How are you doing?

We are seeing light at the end of the tunnel with the arrival of vaccine! I hope and pray that 2021 will be a year of healing and rebirth for all of us and the entire world.

Day-trips will come back and I know that you will be lining up to participate and enjoy them. Meanwhile I am keeping you entertained with trivia questions. Last month you were asked to respond to five questions. (Oh gosh! You forgot the questions!)

Here they are:

1. *Jonny's mother had three children: The first was named Mark, the second was named Joe. What was her third child's name?*
2. *There is a clerk at the butcher shop. He is five feet ten inches tall and he wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh?*
3. *Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?*
4. *How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet?*
5. *What word in the English Language is always spelled incorrectly?*

For those who still remember them or did their assignment (haha) here are the answers:

1. Jonny
 2. meat
 3. Mt. Everest
 4. None
 5. Incorrectly
- Looking forward to announcing fabulous day-trips in the near future. Have a good vaccination experience.

May 2021 be a more peaceful and healthy year for everyone.

Chapter 2426 Volunteers

Many of our members have continued to volunteer to help others during these difficult times.

Please send an email and let Diane McGowan, dianemcg70@gmail.com know how you or your friends are volunteering.

Diane Wright volunteers 5 hours on Monday and Tuesday at the St. Ignatius Food pantry. She visits seniors who are "staying in place" in their homes and window visits to a nursing home resident. She helps feed a relatives cat, delivers the neighborhood newsletter and helping organize/collect food/household items for Myanmar community.

Ed Gonzales says I'd like to give a shout out to ALL the ladies in our Chapter who are part of the St. Ignatius Food Pantry. I went by a couple of Thursdays ago to drop off some egg cartons and HEB plastic bags and it was really heartwarming to see the long lines of appreciative folks being helped there.

John Conrado reports

Althea is still furiously knitting blanket/lab robes for hospice patients. She's turned out 94 blankets and logged close to 3400 hours this year, which comes out to 36 hours a blanket (which checks the time my son and I came up with one time keeping track of her knitting one blanket).

Wishing you a Happy New Year in 2021 (sooner or later it's got to better!)

Roll and Stroll and Community Service Committee
Pat Thomas

COMMUNITY SERVICE - A POSITIVE OUTLOOK
Looking forward to 2021 with optimism and gratitude

I believe there are four life choices that can make each new year memorable.

1. Volunteer to bring joy to another creature - human or animal
2. Exercise your body and your mind.
3. Be grateful for what you have and what you don't have.
4. Laugh each day, even when it hurts.

VOLUNTEER:

Research has confirmed what most of us know volunteering and helping others doesn't just help the people or the cause that you're giving your time to. It can help you feel better too. Volunteering can decrease feelings of depression, increase life satisfaction, and improve overall well-being, according to an analysis published in BMC Public Health. So here are some ideas to consider while staying safe during a pandemic but continuing to help humanity.

Consider helping Meals on Wheels: As MOW prepares to resume daily meal deliveries in 2021, they currently have 200 open routes. Online volunteer training is held, via a Zoom format, on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, 11:00AM - 11:30AM. Please call 737-218-4260 or email volunteer@mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org for any questions. Donating just an hour of your time once a week will make a world of difference. And, you can choose a meal pick-up site that is convenient to where you live.

Share helpful news with family and friends on topics that you feel could be beneficial:

AGE of Central Texas will be offering a virtual caregiver support conference "Caregiver Training Camp" on March 30th through April 2nd. Designed to help first-time, unpaid family members effectively care for an older adult, the free conference will include virtual sessions each day at 1:00 pm. to 2:30 p.m. For additional information call: Natalie Alcorta at (512) 600-9275.

Perhaps you know someone who is stressed/depressed. Last year one of our programs was provided by "Integral Care" of Austin 512-472-4357. They provide immediate emotional support via a crisis helpline. Family abuse and suicide is prevalent during times of great stress.

Please report your volunteer hours to Ed Gonzales so that they can be recorded by the national office.

EXERCISE FOR BODY AND MIND:

I think I can do this one - Toe Lifts

<https://mobilitydeck.com/exercises-for-seniors/#:~:text=%208%20Accessible%20Exercises%20f>

[or%20Seniors%20%201,your%20right%20foot%20in%20Front%20of...%20More%20](#)

Simple exercise for seniors - Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CE4ijWlQ18>

Let's try to exercise our mind. We are all aware of books and crosswords but give the following ideas a try. Let's learn the foreign word for bathroom in five different languages. "Frence -salle de bains", "German-Badezimmer" - For the link to learn 100 more:

<https://www.indifferentlanguages.com/words/bathroom>

Brain Teasers:

What word is spelled incorrectly in every dictionary?

What never asks a question but gets answered all the time?

What goes up but never comes down?

What starts with an e and ends with an e but has only one letter in it?

How do you make the number one disappear?

You will have to read the February newsletter for the answers.

GRATITUDE:

As this stressful year ends, it's important to reflect on all of the blessings you have. Gratitude is something that we should be able to express on any occasion—no matter how big or small. Sometimes, the right words escape us. That's why keeping a list of gratitude quotes from esteemed writers, poets, and thinkers is helpful. Each evening as I try to sleep I let my mind consider five things for which I am thankful. i.e. I'm thankful that I never married my high school boyfriend. Consider the following gratitude quotes.

"When eating fruit, remember the one who planted the tree." - Vietnamese Proverb

"Got no checkbooks, got no banks, still I'd like to express my thanks. I got the sun in the morning and the moon at night." Irving Berlin

"He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has." - Epictetus

"We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives."- John F. Kennedy

I am thankful for the friendship each of you provides to me - Pat Thomas

LAUGHTER:

1. The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference.

He acquired his size from too much pi.

2. I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.
 3. She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.
 4. A rubber - band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.
 5. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
 6. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
 7. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
 8. A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.
 9. The soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.
 10. A vulture carrying two dead raccoons boards an airplane. The stewardess looks at him and says, 'Sorry, only one carrion allowed per passenger.'
- There was the person who sent ten puns to friends with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.

2021 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 |
| | Gail Glick | 214-808-6622 |
| Hospitality: | Connie Flores | 512-536-0694 |
| Legislative: | Mary Ragland | 512-280-2661 |
| 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 |
| Sunshine: | Kathryn Stone | 512-441-6038 |
| Travel | Mario Macaluso | 512-432-5255 |

Chapter 2426 Treasurer's Report *Bill Nicholson*

| Assets | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Chapter Checking Account | \$ 3,206.50 |
| Travel Checking Account | 376.83 |
| Savings Account | 25.00 |
| Total Assets | 3,608.33 |
| Liabilities | |
| | 0.00 |
| Net Worth | \$ 3,608.33 |

This month refunds were received from Clark Travel for the two day-trips canceled the first of this year because of the COVID-19 issue.

DUES FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2021

A member's dues for 2021 is \$10. Payment is to be mailed with a *Member Renewal* form to the Treasurer during this pandemic time. A payment of dues will be acknowledged by either email or postal mail.

Even though the Chapter is not having member meetings in person, payment of dues pays for ongoing expenses such as fees for ZOOM virtual meetings for members and the board of directors; insurance premiums; web site fees; monthly Newsletter costs and administrative supplies.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER CHANGES

Changes in your mailing address or telephone number or email address **or** changing to dues exempt status upon attaining 85 years old are to be submitted on the *Membership Renewal* form.

MAILING ADDRESS TO PAY DUES AND PROVIDE MEMBER ROSTER CHANGES

The *Membership Renewal* form can be found on the last page of this newsletter. Mail it with your dues payment and changes in personal information for the Chapter records to:

South Austin AARP Chapter 2426
Bill Nicholson, Treasurer
12512 Gun Metal Dr.
Austin, TX 78739



On average, a Panda feeds for approximately 12 hours per day. This is the same as an adult at home under quarantine, which is why we call it a “Pandemic”

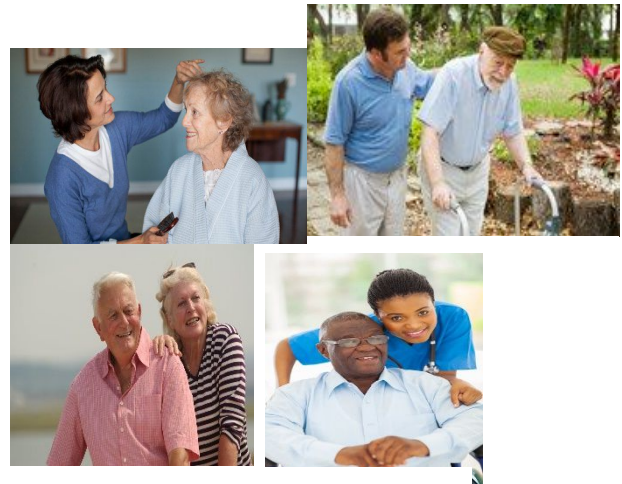
From Where I sit: Welcoming a new year with life enhancing opportunities.
 Nancy Crowther, AARP Chapter 2426 Vice-President

As a volunteer with AARP and a person with a significant disability, I want to share some personal and good information from AARP on being able to have a quality of life and staying in your home (beyond COVID-19) instead of going into a nursing facility “home.” With the many evolutions that the pandemic has brought forward, one is that of Long-Term Services and Supports. I have personally had the opportunity to live in my home and do volunteer work only by grace, the grace of Community Attendants, who, for the past 43 years have seen to my personal needs from bathing, dressing, cooking, housekeeping, and running errands. They are my hands and legs. My reach and stoop. My muscles and limbs. My strength and my hope for the continuing independence I need. They are also friends which stay with me for a long time (except for the ones I have had to let go). Community attendants are a valuable asset to the community as helping outside of the congregate facilities at a more personal and cost-effective manner. The pandemic has turned the focus from nursing homes to in home services provided by

community attendants which has saved thousands of lives in Texas. AARP has endorsed this change in philosophy (*AARP Bulletin* December 2020) which is what I have been working on for several years just to raise the salaries of the Community Attendant from a base wage of \$8.11. What a precious source of human care for us as we age in place at home.

AARP Caregiving 101 & Resources*

Note: Not all resources are available during COVID-19 times



KAREN BEARD/GETTY IMAGES

[En español](#) | Wherever you are along your caregiving journey, there are always new challenges and transitions. Connecting with basic support, training, technology, and local resources is crucial — from long-distance caregiving to transportation options to local support groups. AARP's Caregiving Question and Answer Tool provides key resources and practical tips for navigating your role as caregiver *or recruiting a Community Attendant*.

Q: [How do I find local resources for caregiving, such as transportation, support groups, in-home care and home repair?](#)

A: Eldercare.gov's 'Eldercare Locator' tool provides area-specific recommendations for services including home care, meal plans and transportation options. — [The National Council on Aging](#) has resources for older adults and caregivers.

Local AARP chapters, senior centers in your community, agencies on aging and religious organizations have information about (in-home assistance) activities, adult day services and meal programs, and resources, such as volunteer drivers or companion services.

Transportation companies and nonprofit organizations often provide alternative transportation for older adults, such as public ride-sharing services (dial-a-ride) or paratransit services.

The [National Volunteer Caregiving Network](#) connects seniors with volunteers.

For those with Alzheimer's, diabetes or cancer, disease-specific organizations often provide services that can help both patient and caregiver. The Alzheimer's Association, for example, has a 24-hour help line. The American Cancer Society provides helpful advice on how to be a caregiver to a cancer patient and also offers an online community where cancer caregivers can connect and support one another.

Q: [How do I prepare for my own long-term needs?](#)

A: It is smart that you recognize the importance of thinking about your own long-term care. AARP has several guides and worksheets that can help.

Q: [How do I keep my loved one safe at home?](#)

A: You can go room by room to determine how safe it is by using the home safety checklist from AARP.

Q: [How can I get the person I am caring for to accept help?](#)

A: Be open and honest and share your feelings. Present your concerns as just that — your concerns. Use others as examples to open the conversation or make your point.

Q: [How can I help my family member/friend with long distance care if I don't live nearby?](#)

A: Create a support team. This team is made up of people who are in regular contact with your loved one. Include at least one person close by who can easily check in. If you suspect a problem, local

authorities can provide a welfare check or Adult Protective Services can be involved.

Q: [Can I get paid to be a family caregiver/attendant?](#)

A: Some states have programs that help people pay community attendants and caregivers, including family members. Check with Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) for program options and eligibility.

Q: [Where can I find affordable transportation services for seniors?](#)

A: For occasional trips, consider asking friends and family to volunteer. Depending on your health and locale, public transportation can be a viable option.
*excerpts from the AARP Volunteer Portal



**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 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 | |
| Advocacy/Legislation/Information/Referral Services | | Independent Living: Transportation Services | |
| Education/Scholarships or other | | All Other Volunteer Areas | |
| Subtotal | | Subtotal | |
| | | | Total Volunteer Hours |

**South Austin AARP Chapter 2426
Annual Membership Renewal - 2021**

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone Number _____ National AARP Member No. _____
 Birthday (Month and Day) ____/____/____ Anniversary (Month and Day) ____/____/____
 E-mail Address (Print Clearly) _____
 Signature _____ Date _____

Dues are \$10.00 by cash or check Dues are waived if you are 85 or older: Yes _____
 Complete and mail this renewal with your payment to (checks should be made payable to South Austin AARP Chapter 2426).
 South Austin AARP Chapter 2426, Bill Nicholson, 12512 Gun Metal Dr., Austin, TX 78739

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

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunshine | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Serv | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel (ad hoc) | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | |