

South Austin AARP Chapter 2426

Website: www.southaustinaarp.org

March 2021

Wednesday

March 17, 1:00 p.m.

Meet Austin's Number One Investigative
Reporter Tony Plohetski



Tony Plohetski is a national award winning print and broadcast journalist for the Austin American-Statesman and KVUE-TV. In recent years, he chronicled how an army of police and federal agents took down a serial bomber in Austin and the flawed Williamson County prosecution of a high-school football star who was later exonerated. In 2020, he uncovered the death of Javier Ambler, a 40-year-old Black man, who Williamson County deputies chased for 22 minutes for failing to dim his headlights and used Tasers on as he shouted that he had a heart condition and could not breathe -- all while reality TV shows filmed. Plohetski's investigation culminated in the indictment of Sheriff Robert Chody, his eventual ouster from office by voters and proposed Legislation banning reality TV shows from partnering with Texas police.

Volunteer Hours

Ed Gonzales

February:76 Year to Date: 151

Please send or email your number of volunteer hours.
Look on the last page of the newsletter for the form.

Editors comment: It is sad that so few have turned in their volunteer hours. I know that people have volunteered more than 76 hours! You can email your hours to Ed Gonzales.

REMINDER –PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2021

The chapter membership dues are \$10.00 and are payable to South Austin AARP Chapter 2426. Payment is to be mailed with a *Member Renewal* form to the Treasurer during this pandemic time. A payment will be acknowledged by either email or postal mail.

Even though the Chapter is not having member meetings in-person, dues provide support 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 LIST CHANGES

Changes in your mailing address, telephone number and email address or changing to due- exempt status upon attaining 85 years old are to be submitted to the Treasurer on the *Membership Renewal* form. The *Membership Renewal* form can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

MAILING ADDRESS TO PAY DUES AND SUBMIT THE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

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

AARP Texas Statement on the Wearing of Masks

AARP Texas Director Tina Tran issued the following statement today (Tuesday, March 2): "More than 2.4 million people globally have died so far from COVID-19, and millions more have suffered severe illness. Older Texans and their family members have been among the hardest hit by this deadly virus. AARP Texas recommends that people continue to follow current CDC guidelines on masks." Here is a link to learn more about the CDC recommendations on face coverings to protect yourself and others: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.htm>

Message from the President

Crespin Guzman

Hope this message finds you and yours doing well all around but also somewhat encouraged about the coming year even with all its recent uncertainties, like the “Blizzard of 2021”! **WOW! What a rude awakening we got just when we thought we were turning the corner.**

Regardless, it only cost the Chapter a rescheduling of the General Membership Meeting Program until March. **This is just one example of the resiliency of our planning group, great job!** I do hope that you will make time to attend it because it should be quite interesting as well as enjoyable. More details about it are found in this newsletter.

We continue to see some good news on the vaccine front and that too is a promising sign of better things to come as the year races towards spring and summer. At some point we will have a much clearer picture of what the latter part of our year might shape up to be under our “New Normal”. With the continued partnership and support of SASAC, we can only hope for the best since they have always been so good for this community.

Your officers and Board of Directors has your best interests in mind as we work on your behalf but you must make yourselves heard with your ideas on programming and activities and other matters of importance to you.

We look forward to hearing from you, so stay safe and connected with us!

Travel

Mario Macaluso

Fellow-Travelers

Spring is soon beginning. Vaccines are getting more abundant and hope for an end to our isolation is brighter than ever.

Patience, cooperation and goodwill are going to make us all free to travel again.

Meanwhile let us do good deeds by loving ourselves and others as we remember that:

“Rivers do not drink their water.

Trees do not eat their fruit.

The sun does not shine for its own. Flowers do not spread their scent for themselves. They live for others.

It is the rule of Nature. Life is beautiful when you are happy, however life is much better when others are happy because of you.

Our nature is to be of service. He who does not live to serve, does not serve to live.”

Israelmore Avivor

Roll and Stroll and Community Service Committee

Pat Thomas

COMMUNITY SERVICE - Let's Celebrate Our Diversity Commentary by Pat Thomas

Women's History Month is an annual declared month that highlights the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society. It is celebrated during March in the United States. There is also an International Women's Day celebration. This article encourages you to read about the history of great women who have gone before us and to celebrate the women that will be leading us into the future.

When I opened my computer this morning I came across fascinating information about a 1,000-Square-Foot Mosaic of Ida B. Wells on display at Washington D.C.'s Union Station in 2020. The artwork, installed in honor of the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, celebrates the life of pioneering civil rights leader and journalist Ida B. Wells.

In September 1883, a conductor on a train bound from Memphis to Woodstock, Tennessee, ordered a young Ida B. Wells to leave her first-class seat in the rear coach, which he claimed was reserved for white passengers, and move to a section most often frequented by smokers and drunks. She fought back, even biting the conductor, but was eventually forcibly removed by a group of three men. The following year, Wells sued the railroad—and won a \$500 settlement (around \$13,000 today). But Tennessee's Supreme Court later reversed the lower court's decision, ruling in favor of the segregationist company.

The mosaic was designed by award-winning artist Helen Marshall. The mosaic is assembled from thousands of photos yet every single one tells a story.

For more information about the mosaic visit:

<https://thepeoplespicture.com/>



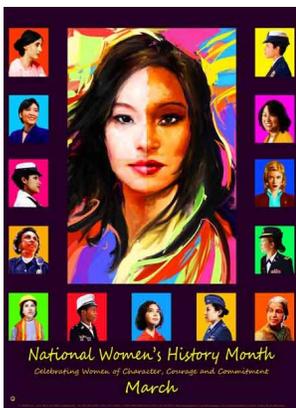
<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/womens-history-month>

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/women-s-history-month-why-it-takes-place-in-march/ar-BB1e6QKo?%3Bocid=AARDHP>

<https://www.ourstory100.com/artwork/>

<https://diversitystore.com/products/1845>

This link gives you access to wide variety of educational posters, very good resources for teachers, educators, and workshop leaders. Share the information in this article with your grandchildren and your great grandchildren!



LET'S TAKE A WALK. (Let's try a roll & stroll) April is bluebonnet month. Let's take a walk in late March to encourage the bluebonnets to emerge from the cold depths of winter. I'm suggesting that we meet near the walking trail on Wm Cannon near Costco or to the boardwalk trail off East Riverside. We will walk and have the option to eat at a safe restaurant. Yes, masks are still required. I can not yet give you an exact date as I need to watch the weather. We will email you when the temperature reaches 65+. If you are interested in walking please email Deborah Fennell at

djfenn5353@gmail.com or Pat Thomas at rollandstroll@austin.rr.com

From Where I Sit

Nancy Crowther, AARP Chapter 2426 Vice-President

Supporting Older Texans Seeking to Age with Dignity From our AARP State Office

Amanda Fredricksen

Our needs to prepare for future funding: AARP urges the Legislature to establish a statewide interagency aging coordinating council. The council would help to ensure a strategic statewide approach to the needs of the state's increasingly larger older population, including development of a collaborative five-year strategic plan.

Fund Long Term Facility Regulatory Backlog (HHSC Exceptional Item) Fully fund HHSC's request for \$28 million in GR for the biennium to hire additional inspectors and retain existing inspectors so that the agency will be able to properly investigate all complaints. During the COVID-19 pandemic, nursing homes have been ravaged by the virus. Improve Nursing Home Quality and Safety by Investing in Staff. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas had one of the lowest nursing facility nursing staffing and total care staffing levels in the country. Only one state, Louisiana, had a lower average hours per resident day (HPRD) for registered nursing (RN) care staff than Texas. Texas averaged 0.2 HPRD. The national average was 0.5. Texas had an average of 2.8 HPRD for total care staff. Only one other state, Oklahoma, had a lower average HPRD for total care staff.

Nursing home staffing levels in Texas have been dangerously low. Another way to describe it, on average, Texas nursing home residents receive 12 minutes per day of care from a registered nurse. The national average is 30 minutes. And the CMS recommendation is 45 minutes per day.

Establish Quality Incentive Payment Program (QIPP) Metrics that Incentivize Staffing Quality. Staffing has been a challenge for Texas nursing homes and community attendants and COVID-19 has only exacerbated this issue. More needs to be done to ensure nursing homes are appropriately staffed to ensure proper resident care and safety. The state could use QIPP dollars to incent better staffing in facilities. Establish a Task force on Nursing Home Workforce and Quality. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas nursing

homes faced a workforce shortage that threatened quality of care and patient safety. The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 in nursing homes has exacerbated staffing challenges and created an urgent need to examine the workforce shortage and direct-care staffing levels, along with reforms that promote resident well-being, health and safety.

Support Information on Resident Quality of Care and Safety in Assisted Living Direct HHSC to look at the quality of care in assisted living facilities using a model similar to the Nursing Facility Quality Report currently conducted by HHSC. Assisted living [also community] is the fastest growing segment of Texas' long term care market and very little is known about the quality of care provided in these facilities.

Support Unpaid Family Caregivers An increase in funding for the Lifespan Respite Caregiver Program (Rider 54 in HB1 and Rider 52 in SB1). The base budget includes \$1M GR funding for the Texas Lifespan Respite Caregiver Program. AARP is requesting an increase to \$2 million.

Legislative
Mary Ragland

AARP Texas Files Emergency Action Request with the Public Utility Commission of Texas

On Tuesday, March 2, AARP Texas and Texas Legal Services Center filed a formal request with the Public Utility Commission of Texas to provide immediate relief to Texas' residential utility consumers who suffered during the February winter storm. Millions were left without heat and power for days and millions more are being hit with unaffordable electrical bills, the consumer groups wrote. In its request for emergency action, AARP Texas and Texas Legal Services Center blamed the crisis on the PUC's failure to protect customers, the electric market's reliance on price to ensure stability, and the failure of ERCOT to adequately plan for severe weather. While permanent changes are needed to Texas' utility market, AARP Texas and the Texas Legal Services Center said immediate actions are warranted on these and other fronts:

- An end to the sale and promotion of "variable-price" electricity plans to residential customers by retail electric providers;

- A ban on the charging of contract termination fees to customers who switch utility providers
- A stop to so-called "switch holds" that keep customers in deferred payment plans from changing utility providers.
- A halt to any reporting of winter storm 2021 related debts to collection agencies or the filing of adverse credit reports.

The emergency action request to the PUC is signed by AARP Texas Director Tina Tran, and Austin attorney Randy Chapman and Carol Biedrzycki of Austin. "While the immediate danger of outages from this event may be past, substantial harm to residential consumers will persist, absent action," the request reads.

"This electricity emergency was in no way the fault of residential electricity customers, yet they've already paid an untold price," the request continues. "Immediate action...will provide the first threads of a safety net and give consumers more tools to help themselves."

In a statement regarding the letter, Karen Miller, executive director of Texas Legal Services, said the PUC must act to protect customers "Texans suffered during the storm, huddled together, desperate to keep warm," Miller said. "We risked treacherous roads and possible exposure to COVID-19 to get to warming centers. We died in our cars, and in our homes. It was a nightmare and we can't wake from it because we face new fears of unimaginable utility bills that we can't possibly pay, and no faith in a deregulated utility system that's been allowed to run wild, leaving Texas consumers in the cold, fending for ourselves."

A copy of the emergency action request can be found here: <https://aarp-states.brightspotcdn.com/82/09/de537fc24e12b3852d1dee2b12ad/puc-residential-consumer-request-for-emergency-actions.pdf>

The Public Utility Commission of Texas has scheduled open meetings on Wednesday, March 3, and Friday, March 5, starting at 9:30 a.m. both days. For more information about the request to the PUC or to speak with AARP Texas utilities expert Tim Morstad, contact Mark Hollis at 512.480.2429 or mhollis@aarp.org.

Chapter 2426 Volunteers

Connie Flores: "I made some valentine cookies for my neighbors and send out valentine cards to my shut-in friends. I took my elderly neighbors for their vaccines. Delivered water & canned soups to the food pantry & men's sock. Called neighbors to see what I could do for them the week of the snow. Most of them just wanted to have a conversation.

Rosa Hatifield is Abiding Love Food Pantry manager, Lloyd and Karin Matthys work each Monday at the pantry. They served a record number of 221 households on February 22!

Too good to not share 🍌

1. When one door closes and another door opens, you are probably in prison.
2. To me, "drink responsibly" means don't spill it.
3. Age 60 might be the new 40, but 9:00 pm is the new midnight.
4. It's the start of a brand new day, and I'm off like a herd of turtles.
5. The older I get, the earlier it gets late.
6. When I say, "The other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.
7. I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.
8. I had my patience tested. I'm negative.
9. Remember, if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.
10. If you're sitting in public and a stranger takes the seat next to you, just stare straight ahead and say, "Did you bring the money?"
11. When you ask me what I am doing today, and I say "nothing," it does not mean I am free. It means I am doing nothing.
12. I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever.
13. I run like the winded.
14. I hate when a couple argues in public, and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on.
15. When someone asks what I did over the weekend, I squint and ask, "Why, what did you hear?"
16. When you do squats, are your knees supposed to sound like a goat chewing on an aluminum can stuffed with celery?
17. I don't mean to interrupt people. I just randomly remember things and get really excited.
18. When I ask for directions, please don't use words like "east."
19. Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes. That would be boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head. That'll freak you right out.
20. Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your heart race, and changes you forever. We call those people cops.
21. My luck is like a bald guy who just won a comb. Which one is YOUR favorite?

Chapter 2426 Treasurer's Report *Bill Nicholson*

BALANCE SHEET as of February 28, 2021

Assets

Chapter Checking Account	\$ 3,276.93
Travel Checking Account	376.83
Savings Account	25.00
Total Assets	3,678.76
Liabilities	0.00
Net Worth	\$ 3,678.76

The Geezer Test How many of these do you remember?...

1. Cap guns.
2. Home milk deliveries in glass bottles.
3. TV test patterns early in the morning.
4. Curb finders for your car.
5. Stamp books and redemption centers.
6. Phone booths.
7. Aluminum ice cube trays with pull handles.
8. Subway tokens.
9. Crazy Eddies.
10. Earl Scheib's auto paint jobs.
11. Mobile rides that came around the neighborhood.
12. Free road maps at service stations.
13. Seltzer bottles.
14. Doctors who made house calls.
15. Cigarette vending machines.
16. Flash cubes.
17. Lincoln Logs.
18. Johnny on the pony, running bases, stoop ball.
19. F.W. Woolworth Company.
20. Checkered cabs.

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
	Kathryn Stone	512-441-6038
Sunshine:	Mario Macaluso	512-432-5255
Travel		

**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 | |