

# South Austin AARP

## Chapter 2426

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

June 2021

**Wednesday**  
**June 16, 1:00 p.m.**



Rodney Franklin

Rodney Franklin, the Division Director of **Texas State Parks and Wildlife** will be our guest speaker on June 16 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. Franklin began his career with TPWD at the age of 16. (He worked as a seasonal ranger at a historic site in Paris, Texas). After graduation from Texas A&M he began what is now a 28 year career with the parks. He will speak on how the TPWD plans to preserve our parks. He will also give us updates on the park system.

### Message from the President

*Crespin Guzman*

**What a difference a month makes!** From what I have seen and experienced since we sent out the last newsletter, **a new world has opened up to all of us.** And the good part is that it appears that if Memorial Day is any indication, then it should stick around for quite a while! **I hope you are as excited as I am!**

Are we done with COVID, probably not as there is plenty more to learn about it and it and how to live with it after the pandemic. However, if our trusted

health authorities brought us through it, then we should believe that they will continue to guide us past it until **we can see it in our rearview mirror!**

I know that the Chapter is ready to move on with our “New Normal” which **interestingly enough in this short period it has begun to resemble the “Old Normal” that we were used to.** Unfortunately, SASAC is just not quite ready to receive the Chapter as a whole, so we may still be looking at September or later for our first General Membership meeting of 2021.

So, to that end, **our next Board of Directors meeting will be a “face to face” work session in a setting that allows us to be all together in the same room!**

Our Sponsor will be Solstice with Ms. Laura Dutton as Hostess. I visited the property recently and believe that it will serve our work session quite nicely.

The primary purpose of the session will be to focus on program planning and the July Membership meeting in particular, which is typically a social activity and, in this case, just in time. There is a **real need for all Board members to be present along with Committee Chairs** if possible. We will observe some social distancing and if anyone is not comfortable in such a gathering, then wearing a mask is ok.

### Legislative

*Mary Ragland*

Our state AARP staff has been working hard this session to support the needs of Texas Seniors. The following is a press release outlining some of their successes.

AARP Texas applauds state lawmakers who championed meaningful bills that seek to increase consumer

protection, improve healthcare and promote financial resilience.

“Older Texans and their families who have been hard hit by the pandemic and this year’s winter storm have been looking to the Texas Legislature to address crucial needs,” said AARP Texas Director Tina Tran. “AARP Texas has worked closely with lawmakers throughout the 2021 session. We sincerely appreciate the legislators who have fought for older Texans and their families.”

- Strengthen the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) by providing a wellness check to medically fragile Texans during an emergency or natural disaster.
- Take steps toward weatherizing some parts of the electricity supply system.
- Improve the quality of care in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, including funding for more nursing home inspectors, monies to improve nursing home staffing, and studies pertaining to quality of care in assisted living facilities and nursing homes.
- Require long-term care facilities to disclose to current and prospective residents if they are state certified to provide Alzheimer’s care.
- Expand access to high-speed internet through the establishment of a broadband plan and state office.
- Enhance food security for the hungry by making it easier for older Texans, as well as Texans with disabilities and no earned income, to access the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
- Bolster emergency communications for when disaster or power outages threaten to strike.
- Protect consumers against health-related price gouging.
- Ensure greater transparency in hospital billing.
- Improve prescription drug affordability and price transparency.
- Add a preventative dental benefit for some low-income seniors on Medicaid.
- Restore funding so courts can protect vulnerable Texans under guardianship.
- Create additional tools to thwart elder financial exploitation, including increased penalties and more authority for investigators.
- Analyze the impact of revising the government’s long-term care payment systems in hopes of encouraging better use of community-based

care rather than more-expensive institutional care.

## In Memoriam



We were saddened to hear of the death of long-time member Jeanne Streckfus. Her obituary can be seen at: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/statesman/obituary.aspx?n=jeanne-streckfus&pid=198575305&fhid=12078>

## A Poem by Mario Macaluso

The poem is a prose translation of his poem in Italian which was written to be set to music.

### LOOK AT YOUR HANDS

Look at your hands!  
Look at your hands!  
What a treasure! What a gift!  
They are beautiful  
but aren’t yours.  
They are for him, they are for her  
They are for all, black or white  
Small hands or large hands  
Fine hands or calloused hands  
Like the hands of the Creator  
who touched the finger of ancient Adam  
Do now, you all, as God did.  
Hold the hand of young and old  
Give, receive, greet and remind  
Help who is crying, write and share  
You are called to create a new world now  
A better world will fill your heart with joy  
Through the living presence of the Creator  
Small hands or large hands  
Young hands or calloused hands  
They are for him, they are for her  
They are the hands of the Redeemer  
Who, in Galilee, fed the crowd  
They are for all, black or white  
Ready to serve, ready to feed  
Like our God’s ready to love  
Look at your hands!  
Look at your hands!

**From Where I sit**  
*Nancy Crowther, AARP Chapter 2426*  
*Vice-President*

*Click on blue phrases to see pictures and more information*

**Remembering How Memorial Day Began**

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, I was paying my respect to the men and women who serve, who are veterans and those who died to keep our country free on Memorial Day. I remembered my father, Lieutenant Colonel Crowther, US Army. As I reminisced, I felt compelled to look further into the history of Memorial Day.

**Roots of Memorial Day**

**From: May 22, 2021, Time Magazine:**

Memorial Day honors veterans of [all wars](#), but its roots are in America's deadliest conflict, the Civil War. [Approximately 620,000 soldiers died](#), about [two-thirds from disease](#).

The work of honoring the dead began right away all over the country, and several American towns [claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day](#). Researchers have traced the earliest annual commemoration to women who laid flowers on soldiers' graves in the Civil War hospital town of Columbus, Miss., in April 1866. But historians like the Pulitzer Prize winner David Blight have tried to raise awareness of **freed slaves** who decorated soldiers' graves a year earlier, to make sure their story gets told too.

In the approximately 10 days leading up to the event, roughly two dozen African American Charlestonians reorganized the graves into rows and built a 10-foot-tall white fence around them. An archway overhead spelled out "Martyrs of the Race Course" in black letters.

About 10,000 people, mostly black residents, participated in the May 1 tribute, according to coverage back then in the Charleston *Daily Courier* and the New York *Tribune*. Starting at 9 a.m., about 3,000 black schoolchildren paraded around the race track holding roses and singing the Union song "[John Brown's Body](#)," and were followed by adults representing aid societies for freed black men and women. Black pastors delivered sermons and led attendees in prayer and in the singing of spirituals, and there were picnics. James Redpath, the white director of freedman's education in the region, organized about 30 speeches by Union officers, missionaries, and black ministers.

Participants sang patriotic songs like "America" and "We'll Rally around the Flag" and "The Star-Spangled Banner." In the afternoon, three white and black Union regiments marched around the graves and staged a drill.

The origin story involves an 1868 call from General John A. Logan, president of a Union Army veterans' group, urging Americans to decorate the graves of the fallen with flowers on May 30 of that year. The ceremony that took place in [Arlington National Cemetery](#) that day has been considered the first official Memorial Day celebration. Memorial Day became a national holiday two decades later, in 1889, and it took a century before it was moved in 1968 to the last Monday of May, where it remains today. [According](#) to Blight, **Hampton Park**, named after Confederate General Wade Hampton, replaced the gravesite at the Martyrs of the Racecourse, and the graves were reinterred in the 1880s at a national cemetery in Beaufort, S.C.

The fact that the freed slaves' Memorial Day tribute is not as well remembered is emblematic of the struggle that would follow, as African Americans' fight to be fully recognized for their contributions to American society continues to this day.

**More History- Livescience.com** By [Laura Geggel - Editor](#) Columbus, Georgia, where the concept of honoring the soldiers who died in the American Civil War originated, celebrated it a day later, on April 26, 1866, along with dozens of other cities, Gardiner said.

In fact, there are many contenders for where Memorial Day started. Some say it started in Waterloo, New York, in 1866, and President Lyndon B. Johnson even [signed a proclamation](#) saying so in 1966. But historians have since discredited that claim, Gardiner said. Still, some people still trumpet the claim, including [the village of Waterloo itself](#).

In January 1866, the Ladies' Memorial Association in Columbus, Georgia, passed a motion agreeing that they would designate a day to throw flowers on the graves of fallen soldiers buried at the cemetery, Gardiner said.

The ladies asked people to [celebrate the war's fallen](#) soldiers on April 26 — the day the bulk of Confederate soldiers surrendered in North Carolina in 1865.

"That's what many people in the South considered to be the end of the war," Gardiner said. Even though Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, "there were still 90,000 people ready to fight. And until those 90,000

surrendered on April 26, the war was effectively still going on," Gardiner said.

In one of his [2010 weekly addresses](#), President Barack Obama said just that: "On April 25, 1866, about a year after the Civil War ended, a group of women visited a cemetery in Columbus, Mississippi, to place flowers by the graves of Confederate soldiers who had fallen at Shiloh," he said.

In May 1868, the day became a federal holiday. But there were few, if any, flowers blooming in the North in April. So, the government pushed the date up a month, to May 30, so that people could decorate the graves of fallen soldiers [with wildflowers](#).

Memorial Day remained on May 30 until 1971, when the Uniform Monday Holiday Act took effect. This act mandated that federal holiday occur on Mondays and made Memorial Day the last Monday in May.

Memorial Day's many changes underwent scrutiny, however. When it became nationally recognized in 1868, some Northerners resisted, saying they should not follow a Southern idea.

But overall, the holiday has brought people together. Americans still honor it today, [with celebrations and remembrances](#) of people who have died fighting for their country. *Original article on [Live Science](#).*

And as the memories fade, keep in mind: proactive and ongoing efforts toward inclusion and equity are necessary to create and sustain diversity.

###

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*

BALANCE SHEET as of May 31, 2021

### Assets

Chapter Checking Account \$ 3,454.67

Travel Checking Account 25.00

Savings Account 25.00

Total Assets 3,504.67

Liabilities 0.00

Net Worth \$ 3,504.67

### **REMINDER - DUES FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2021**

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

### **MEMBERSHIP LIST CHANGES**

Changes in your mailing address, telephone number and email address or changing to dues 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

## 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:

## Volunteer Hours

*Ed Gonzales*

**May: 431 hours**

**Year to Date: 1,952 hours**

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

**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	
<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 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	