



North Austin Chapter 2700

P O Box 201898
Austin, Texas 78720
<http://www.AARPChapter2700.com>

March-April 2019
Newsletter
Volume 11, Issue 2

The founding principles of AARP are: To promote independence, dignity and purpose for older persons, to enhance the quality of life for older persons, and to encourage older people "To serve, not to be served."

CHAPTER 2700 PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Enedelia Obregón

Volunteers and staff from AARP Texas continue lobbying the Texas Legislature on the top legislative priorities that — if enacted into law — would improve the lives of older Texans.

At a recent coffee to introduce people to AARP, state volunteers also got those who attended to sign a petition asking the governor and the legislature to support those legislative priorities into law.

While it's still early in the session, which runs through May 27th, we need to start contacting our legislators and asking to support these priorities:

- Prevent the abuse of nursing home residents by making it illegal to give them antipsychotic drugs without a medical need and often without consent. Nursing homes rarely face sanctions for such violations.
- Because the agency that investigates abuse and neglect of Texas seniors is severely underfunded, AARP is asking for proper funding of Adult Protective Services to decrease investigators' caseloads and high turnover rates.
- Support family caregivers so that seniors can live independently. Increasing the funding for the Lifespan Respite Care Program will give caregivers a needed break.
- Texas courts do not have resources to oversee court-appointed guardians who oversee health, financial and safety decisions for older Texas and who may be taking advantage of them. Passage of SB 31 would give courts the resources to oversee those guardianships, including compliance specialists to review cases.
- More seniors are choosing to live in assisted living facilities. But little is known about the quality and safety of such facilities. Restoring funding for inspectors for those facilities and requiring facilities to have better disaster preparedness plans would ensure seniors' safety.
- Many seniors have difficulty finding primary care providers and turn to emergency rooms for care or forgo treatment. One solution is to encourage nurse practitioners to stay in Texas by modernizing licensing requirements, such as allowing Advanced Practice Registered Nurses to work without a contract with a physician.
- Surprise medical bills are a big problem despite existing protections. Ending consumer liability in emergency situations when comparison shopping is impossible — such as during a heart attack — would help seniors.

MEETINGS

Please bring a donation for the food bank!

DATE:

TUESDAY, March 19, 2019 (Board Meeting 10:00 am)

TUESDAY, April 16, 2019

LOCATION:

WESTOVER HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

8332 MESA DRIVE

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78759

PROGRAM:

1:00 pm

SOCIAL & BUSINESS:

1:30 pm



There will be our customary drawings at the meeting for prizes (you have to be present to win)!

Please bring a donation to the food bank and something for the potluck dinner!

PROGRAM FOR MARCH 19, 2019

TRAVIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PROGRAM

Kirk Walden

Kirk will share tips on container gardening. There are many plants that can be grown in containers indoors or on patios. He will share tips on what flowers, herbs and other plants will grow best in containers and also why gardening is good for the mind and the body.

Sponsor: Enedelia Obregón

(President's Corner continued)

If you don't know who your state legislator or state senator is, go to wrm.capitol.texas.gov and fill in your address. Anyone in Texas can find out who represents them by going to this website.

In the good news department, all the Travis County legislators represent our agenda. However, other legislators do not — especially from rural areas. Contact your friends and family in other counties and ask them to support the AARP agenda.

2019 OFFICERS

President: Enedelia Obregón....512-331-1890
Vice President:VACANT
Secretary: Judy Devore.....512-420-9494
Treasurer: Leslie Ashton.....512-750-1513

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Virgil Murphy, Aline Murphy, Tomás Garza,
 Dianna Stiefer**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Check-In:	Doris Hill 512-452-7325
Membership Sign Up:	Hilda Venema 512-837-4052
Membership & Website Chair:	Judy Devore 512-420-9494
Legislative Chair:	Enedelia Obregón 512-331-1890
Programs:	Dorothy Clark 737-529-4000
Community Service Chair	Chinell Williams 512-928-2419
Co-Chair	Diane Wright 512-892-3354
Caring Committee:	Naomi Hodge 512-745-7760
Telephone Chair:	Yvonne Connell 512-261-9783
Volunteer Hours:	Aline Murphy 512-869-1471
Refreshments:	Randi Parker 512-258-0039
Travel Chair:	Connie Dunn 512-497-2897
Travel Treasurer:	Dixie Saxon 512-944-6011
Newsletter Editor:	Kitty Traylor 512-569-9479
	kittytraylor@gmail.com

UPCOMING PROGRAMS**APRIL 16, 2019****IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS**

Steven Frantz was a social worker in hospice for 10 years and saw that it was often the little things that brought joy and comfort to people in hospice care. So in 2015, he started The Importance of Little Things. Someone in hospice or dealing with a life-threatening disease, or a loved one, or professional caregiver can apply for a \$150 grant to fulfill a wish. So far, the "little things" have ranged from a box of imported chocolates to a visit from a miniature horse.

Sponsor: Enedelia Obregón

MAY 21, 2019**ALL YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT ICE CREAM**

Daryl Schultz
 Blue Bell Ice Cream, District Manager
Sponsor: Dorothy Clark



Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over,
 it became a butterfly...

—Proverb

**2019 TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES**

Travel Committee: Connie Dunn, Dixie Saxon, Judy Devore, and Shirley Paz

All costs listed are per person based on double occupancy and \$150.00 deposit required to hold your reservation. For Diamond Tours, additional costs for single occupancy and trip insurance is available.

DEPOSITS CAN BE MADE ON ALL TRIPS AT THIS TIME

*Mail deposits to: AARP Chapter 2700
 P O Box 201898 AUSTIN, TX 78720*

Date: July 14 - 19, 2019

PENNSYLVANIA AMISH LANDS

\$1,019.00 - double occupancy

\$1,218.00 - single occupancy

\$989.00 - triple occupancy

Round trip airfare included.

WAIT LIST ONLY!

Date: October 5 - 12, 2019

ALBUQUERQUE, SANTA FE, & TAOS

\$1,269.00 - double occupancy

\$1,608.00 - single occupancy

There are approximately 10 seats remaining

Questions or concerns, please call:

Dixie Saxon at 512-944-6011

Visit our AARP North Austin Chapter 2700 Website to see pictures of our wonderful trips!

Photos for the website: <https://photos.google.com/>.
 Share the link with us and we can post that to our website.

MEMBERSHIP

Judy Devore (Chair)

We have 320 members with 59 new. If you are **not** getting the newsletter or notices from the travel committee by email or by snail mail, it may be because your information is not correct on our list, or you have not paid your dues for the year. Please call Judy Devore @ 512-420-9494!

To download the newsletter, you need the free Adobe Reader!

CARING COMMITTEE

If you or another chapter member are sick, has had some type of surgery and is recovering, hospitalized, or has lost a loved one, and you would like to list it in the newsletter, please contact Naomi below:

Naomi Hodge (ahodge55@sbcglobal.net or 512-745-7760), Yvonne Connell, & Joan Ewen

CHAPTER 2700 COMMUNITY SERVICE

Chinell Williams (Chair)

Our next community service project is our Annual Stonebriar Nursing & Rehabilitation Center Bingo Event on **March 29th at 2:00 pm.**

NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP!

Please bring the following donations to our **March 19th** meeting:

Bingo Prize List: Shampoo, deodorant, hair products, men's bandanas, light weight blankets, folding fans, note cards with envelopes, earrings (clip or pierced), necklaces, body spray, funny socks, picture frames, nail polish, wind chimes, stuffed animals, wall hangings, large print crossword puzzles and word search, adult coloring books, and bottled water. **(NO FOOD ITEMS PLEASE!)**



Thank you to AARP member Dianna Stiefer who collects and recycles bags from her neighbors. Her donation of 131 bags saves the Food Pantry \$32.75 if they would have to purchase bags.

Bring surplus bags to our meetings and be a good citizen!

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide

Free tax preparation help if you're 50 and older, and can't afford a tax preparation service. We were made especially for you.

(Call before you go for info on what to bring!)

Faulk Central Library 512-974-7400
Hampton Branch @ Oak Hill 512-974-9900
Howson Branch 512-974-8800
Little Walnut Creek Branch 512-974-9860
North Village Branch 512-974-9960
Pleasant Hill Branch 512-974-3940
Ruiz Branch 512-974-7500
Southeast Branch 512-974-8840
University Hills Branch 512-974-9940
Yarborough Branch 512-974-8820
Allen Baca Senior Center 512-218-5499
Cedar Park Library 512-258-6346
Jonestown Community Library 512-267-7511
Leander Public Library 512-259-5259
Pflugerville Community Library 512-990-5375
S Austin Senior Activity Center 512-448-0787

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A GOOD END OF LIFE.

Katy Butler (Author of "The Art of Dying Well" (Scribner, 2019))

Have a vision. Imagine what it would take you to die in peace and work back from there. Whom do you need to thank or forgive? Do you want to have someone reading to you from poetry or the Bible, or massaging your hands with oil, or simply holding them in silence? Talk about this with people you love. Once you've got the basics clear, expand your horizons. A former forester, suffering from multiple sclerosis, was gurneyed into the woods in Washington state by volunteer firefighters for a last glimpse of his beloved trees. Something like this is possible if you face death while still enjoying life. Appoint someone with people skills and a backbone to speak for you if you can no longer speak for yourself.

Stay in charge. If your doctor isn't curious about what matters to you or won't tell you what's going on in plain English, fire that doctor. That's what Amy Berman did when a prominent oncologist told her to undergo chemotherapy, a mastectomy, radiation and then more chemo to treat her stage-four inflammatory breast cancer. She settled on another oncologist who asked her, "What do you want to accomplish?" Berman said that she was aiming for a "Niagara Falls trajectory." To live as well as possible for as long as possible, followed by a rapid final decline. Berman, now 59, went on an estrogen suppressing pill. Eight years, later, she's still working, she's climbed the Great Wall of China, and has never been hospitalized. "Most doctors," she says, "focus only on length of life. That's not my only metric."

Know the trajectory of your illness. If you face a frightening diagnosis, ask your doctor to draw a sketch tracking how you might feel and function during your illness and its treatments. A visual will yield far more helpful information than asking exactly how much time you have left. When you become fragile, consider shifting your emphasis from cure to comfort and find an alternative to the emergency room. And don't be afraid to explore hospice sooner rather than later. It won't make you die sooner, it's covered by insurance, and you are more likely to die well, with your family supported and your pain under control.

Find your tribe and arrange caregivers. Dying at home is labor-intensive. Hospices provide home visits from nurses and other professionals, but your friends, relatives and hired aides will be the ones who empty bedpans and provide hands-on care. You don't have to be rich, or a saint, to handle this well. You do need one fiercely committed person to act as a central tent pole and as many part-timers as you can marshal. People who die comfortable, well-supported deaths at home tend to have one of three things going for them: money, a rich social network of

neighbors or friends, or a good government program (like PACE, the federal Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly). Don't wait until you're at death's door to explore your passions, deepen your relationships and find your posse. Do favors for your neighbors and mentor younger people. It doesn't matter if you find your allies among fellow quilters, bridge-players, tai chi practitioners, or in the Christian Motorcyclists Association. You just need to share an activity face-to-face.

Take command of the space. No matter where death occurs, you can bring calm and meaning to the room. Don't be afraid to rearrange the physical environment. Weddings have been held in ICUs so that a dying mother could witness the ceremony. In a hospital or nursing home, ask for a private room, get televisions and telemetry turned off, and stop the taking of vital signs.

Clean house: Hospice nurses often list five emotional tasks for the end of life: thank you, I love you, please forgive me, I forgive you, and goodbye. Do not underestimate the power of your emotional legacy, expressed in even a small, last-minute exchange. Kathy Duby of Mill Valley was raised on the East Coast by a violent alcoholic mother. She had no memory of ever hearing, "I love you." When Duby was in her 40s, her mother lay dying of breast cancer in a hospital in Boston. Over the phone, she told Duby, "Don't come, I don't want to see you." Duby got on a plane anyway. She walked into the hospital room to see a tiny figure curled up in bed — shrunken, yellow, bald, bronzed by jaundice, as Duby later wrote in a poem. Duby's mother said aloud, "I love you and I'm sorry." Duby replied, "I love you and I'm sorry." "Those few moments," Duby said, "Cleared up a lifetime of misunderstanding each other."

Think of death as a rite of passage. In the days before effective medicine, our ancestors were guided by books and customs that framed dying as a spiritual ordeal rather than a medical event. Without abandoning the best of what modern medicine has to offer, return to that spirit. Over the years, I've learned one thing: Those who contemplate their aging, vulnerability and mortality often live better lives and experience better deaths than those who don't. They enroll in hospice earlier, and often feel and function better — and sometimes even live longer — than those who pursue maximum treatment. We influence our lives, but we don't control them, and the same goes for how they end. No matter how bravely you adapt to loss and how cannily you navigate our fragmented health system, dying will still represent the ultimate loss of control. But you don't have to be a passive victim. You retain moral agency. You can keep shaping your life all the way to its end — as long as you seize the power to imagine, to arrange support and to plan.

How Can I Control My Blood Pressure? from National Institute on Aging (NIH)

High blood pressure is very common in older people. As we age, our vascular system changes. Arteries get stiffer, so blood pressure goes up. This is true even for people who have heart-healthy habits. The good news is that blood pressure can be controlled in most people.

There are many lifestyle changes you can make to lower your risk of high blood pressure:

Keep a healthy weight. Being overweight adds to your risk of high blood pressure. Ask your doctor if you need to lose weight.

Exercise every day. Moderate exercise can lower your risk of high blood pressure. Set some goals so you can exercise safely and work your way up to exercising at least 30 minutes a day most days of the week. Check with your doctor before starting an exercise plan if you have any health problems that are not being treated. You can find more information about exercise and physical activity at <https://go4life.nia.nih.gov>.

Eat a healthy diet. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products may help to lower blood pressure.

Cut down on salt. As you get older, the body and blood pressure become more sensitive to salt (sodium), so you may need to watch how much salt is in your diet. Most of the salt comes from processed foods (for example, soup and baked goods). A low-salt diet, such as the [DASH](#) diet, might help lower your blood pressure. Talk with your doctor

about eating less salt.

Drink less alcohol. Drinking alcohol can affect your blood pressure. Men should not have more than two drinks a day and women no more than one a day to lower their risk of high blood pressure.

Don't smoke. Smoking increases your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and other health problems. If you smoke, quit. You are never too old to quit, and the health benefits of quitting can be seen at any age.

Get a good night's sleep. Tell your doctor if you've been told you snore or sound like you stop breathing for moments when you sleep. This may be a sign of a problem called sleep apnea. Treating sleep apnea and getting a good night's sleep can help to lower blood pressure.

Manage stress. Relaxing and coping with problems can help lower high blood pressure.

If these lifestyle changes don't lower your blood pressure to a safe level, your doctor will also prescribe medicine. You may try several kinds or combinations of medicines before finding a plan that works best for you. Medicine can control your blood pressure, but it can't cure it. You will likely need to take medicine for the rest of your life. Plan with your doctor how to manage your blood pressure.

SEVEN REFRESHING DRINKS TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

Vivehealth.com

Hibiscus Tea, Beet Juice, Water, Milk, Pomegranate Juice, Cranberry Juice, and Red Wine.

NORTH AUSTIN AARP Chapter 2700
P O BOX 201898
AUSTIN TX 78720

