

AREA ECHO

DECEMBER 2025

Join us:
December 8,
Class Act Tap Company,
10:30 Social, 11:00 Program
At Heritage Ranch, Fairview
Register Nov. 23 - 30

Judi Oehler, ECHO chair



MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear amazing AREA Friends,

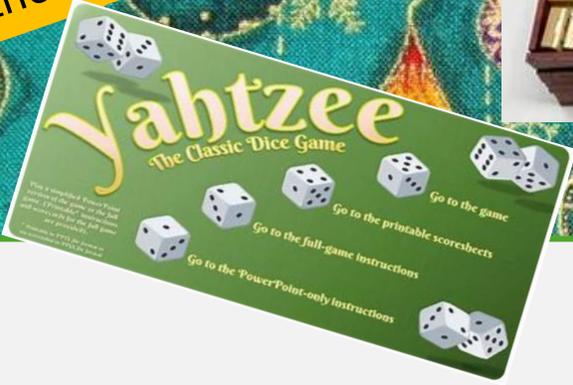
With the holidays fast approaching, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to every one of you for your incredible hard work and dedication! Thanks to your unwavering commitment, AREA has not only flourished but continues to make a lasting impact on our community. Your passion for supporting one another, fostering connections, and advancing the values of education is truly inspiring. It is because of your collective efforts that this organization has become such a successful and meaningful part of our lives!

Thank you for everything you do. Your time, energy and care do not go unnoticed, and I feel so fortunate to be part of such a wonderful group of individuals!

With deepest appreciation,
Donna Jones



JOIN the FUN



Scholarship Committee
Carole Smithwick

GAME DAY – 2/23/2026

Monday, February 23, 2026, tickets will continue to be available at our December and January AREA meetings.

Tickets are **\$30** and can be purchased with cash, check or credit card. Your hostess will also have the opportunity to reserve a table at that time. You do not have to have a game group to participate; we will find a group for you.

For additional questions, contact Carole Smithwick @ [smithwick_carole@ gmail.com](mailto:smithwick_carole@gmail.com) or 469-585-38621





“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

—Dr. Jane Goodall

Benefits of Volunteering

Some really good reasons to volunteer:

Community:

You directly help people, animals, or causes that need support. Volunteering builds stronger communities and helps you feel more connected and invested in the community. You often meet people with shared values and interests.

Mental and emotional benefits:

*Boosts happiness-helps trigger that “helper’s high.”
It can be infectious.
Reduces stress and depression.
Increases confidence, gratitude, and empathy.*

Physical benefits:

*Volunteers report better health and lower blood pressure.
It keeps you active.
Volunteering roles involve movement and outdoor activities.
People who volunteer tend to live longer and healthier lives.*

So, volunteer, have a purposeful life and report those hours! *Linda Wood at mousblu@hotmail.com*

SAVE THE DATE



Start Date:
February 16, 2026

End Date:
April 12, 2026

Last Date to Enter Mileage:
April 15, 2026



Save



Walk across Texas

A free, 8-week, team-based walking challenge to help Texans stay active and develop the habit of regular physical activity. More details coming soon!

**- Constant Contact:
Early Dates for
December 8 Meeting**

The AREA December Meeting is the **second** Monday of the month due to the holidays.

This earlier date means the registration invitations and deadlines will be sooner than usual.

**Invitation-November
23rd and December Deadline-
November 30th, 5:00 pm.**

AREA Meeting-December 8th.

Mark your calendars with the deadlines so that you will register in time to attend the December meetings.
Pat Hill

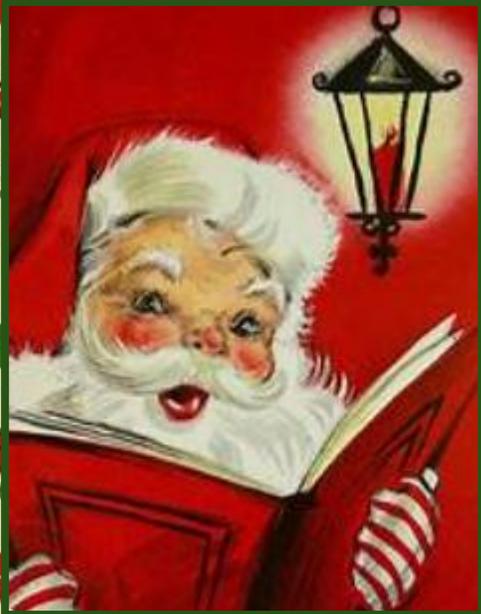


Maybe there was a creature stirring after all.

Allen Retired Educators Book Club

Readers, please join us at 11:30 AM on 12/10 at Kelly's in Allen as Barb Lye treats us to a discussion of Comfort and Joy. On January 14, 2026 at 11:30 AM, Sheryl Harlow leads us in a discussion of The Briar Club at 54th Street in McKinney. Finally, February 11 we will enjoy Betty Moss's review of Book Club of Troublesome Women at Gloria's in Fairview at 11:30 AM. To RSVP to any of these events or for further information, contact valerielapp77@gmail.com or barblye71@gmail.com.

Book Club



Save

December Wellness & Joy

As the festive season twinkles into view, December brings opportunities for joy and connection. It's also a crucial time to prioritize your health. Here are some tips to help you enjoy a vibrant and healthy month!

Your Health Through the Holidays

1. Stay Immune-Strong: The holiday season often means more gatherings, which can increase exposure to colds and flu.

- **Hand Washing:** Keep washing your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- **Rest Up:** Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Good sleep is fundamental for a strong immune system.

- **Nutrient-Rich Foods:** Enjoy festive foods in moderation, but also focus on plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to keep your immunity robust.

2. Manage Holiday Stress: While joyful, the holidays can also bring stress.

- **Set Boundaries:** It's okay to say no to some invitations if you feel overwhelmed. Prioritize what brings you true joy.

- **Mindful Moments:** Take short breaks for deep breathing, meditation, or simply quiet reflection each day.

- **Stay Active:** Even a short walk can help clear your mind and reduce stress.

3. Hydration is Key: In cooler weather, it's easy to forget to drink enough water. Stay hydrated by sipping water, herbal teas, or warm broths throughout the day. This helps with everything from digestion to energy levels.

May you all have a joyous and peaceful holiday season!

Cindy Blair - Healthy Living Chair, cindy_blair@sbcglobal.net



Gary Schept & Susan McDaniel
Officer Elections
District 10 Meeting



District 10
Fall Conference

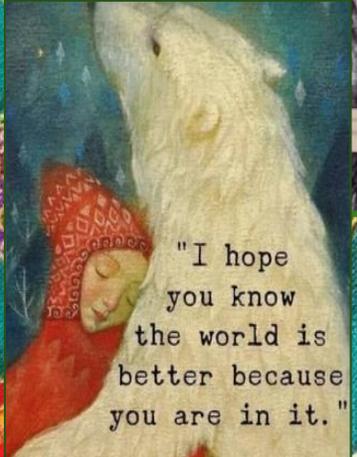


"Harvesting The Future"

District Meeting



District 10 Fall Conference



"I hope you know the world is better because you are in it."



December Safety & Security

1. Deck the Halls Safely: Holiday decorating can be fun, but safety should always come first.

- **Stable Footing:** If using a step stool or ladder for decorating, always have someone spot you. Even better, ask for help with higher tasks.
- **Light Safety:** Inspect holiday lights for frayed wires or broken sockets before using them. Use LED lights, which run cooler and are more energy-efficient.
- **Fireplace Care:** If you have a fireplace, ensure it's clean before use. Never burn wrapping paper or cardboard, as they can cause chimney fires.

2. Watch for Winter Hazards: Colder temperatures and potential snow or ice bring new safety considerations.

- **Slippery Surfaces:** Be extra cautious on steps and sidewalks. Icy patches can be invisible. Wear shoes with good traction.
- **Layer Up:** When heading outdoors, dress in layers to stay warm. A hat, gloves, and a warm coat are essential to prevent hypothermia.

3. Guard Against Holiday Scams: Unfortunately, scammers often target seniors during the holiday season.

- **Be Skeptical:** If an offer seems too good to be true, or if someone asks for personal information or gift cards, it's likely a scam.
- **Verify Charities:** If you plan to donate, do so directly to reputable charities you know. Avoid responding to unsolicited requests.
- **Online Shopping Safety:** Use secure websites (look for "https://" in the address bar) and strong passwords if shopping online.

Connect & Celebrate

- **Reach Out:** The holidays are a wonderful time to connect with loved ones. If travel isn't possible, schedule video calls or phone chats.
- **Community Events:** Look for local community events, senior center activities, or holiday concerts. These are great ways to stay engaged and reduce feelings of isolation.
- **Reflect & Plan:** Take some time to reflect on the past year and set gentle intentions for the new year ahead.

Wishing you a warm, safe, and joyful December! Cindy Reese, Safety Chair, Cindy2reese@gmail.com

TRTF AUCTION

AREA members donated \$468 in cash/checks; another \$1,981 was raised through the silent/live auctions. Since the AREA budget contributes \$1,000 to TRTF annually, the total donation to be sent in this year to TRTF will be \$3,449.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to all who contributed baskets or bid on baskets. Special thanks to Karen Malinowsky for all her hard work and dedication leading up to the event.

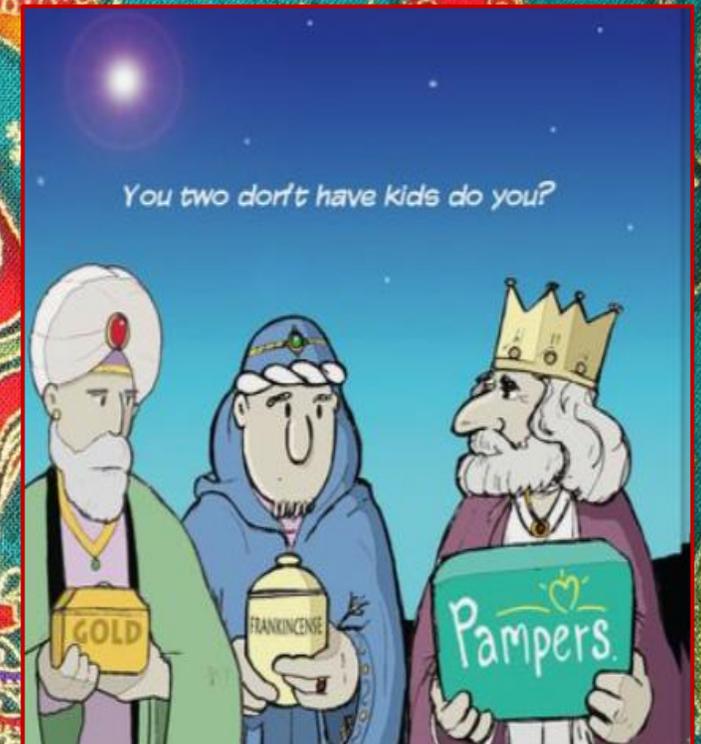
Nancy Hodson

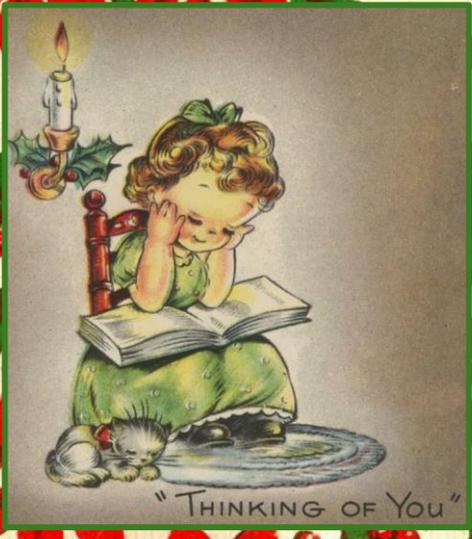


**THANK
YOU!**

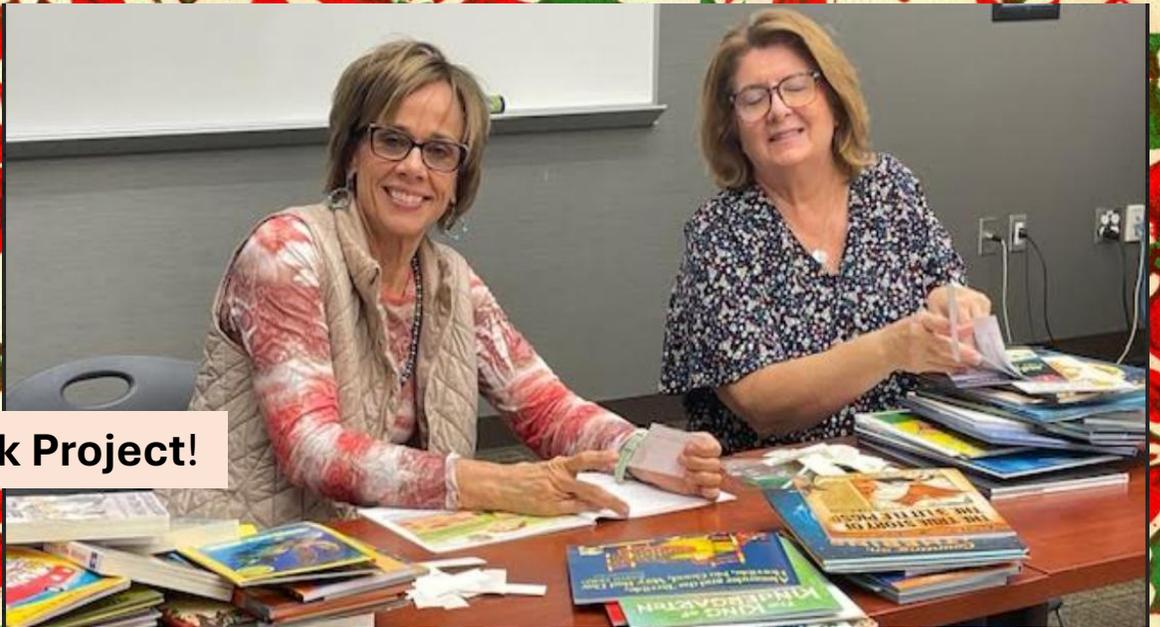


Thank
you!





Volunteers working on the Book Project!





AREA 2025 Scholarship Committee



AREA Scholarship Committee members met on Oct. 6, to plan GAME DAY, the Annual Scholarship Fundraiser. Committee members will be collecting door prizes, raffle items, selling tickets, planning lunch and the Chico Fashion Show.





MERRY
CHRISTMAS



*...And a happy,
healthy NEW YEAR!*