



PANAMERICANA TEXANA

Spring 2026 Vol.45, No. 4

Message from the State Director - The Farewell Edition



My goodness, where did the biennium go. I am sure that you will agree that it was as if it was a few days ago that we began this adventure but here it is the end of the biennium. In all truthfulness it was an adventure that was life changing and which provided so many wonderful and enjoyable experiences. In retrospect I would not change any aspect of the biennium, all the table visits, celebrations, new friendships, and the many opportunities to renew old acquaintances. It was my pleasure to be involved in all the events and to interact with so many PART sisters.

The goal that I set for the biennium was to do everything we could to focus our attention and energies on the mission that had been established by our foundress. Mrs. Griswold's vision, when she established the Pan American Round Table, was to have an organization which would lend assistance to the women and children fleeing the violence in Mexico. The ideals of our organization which are to strive for knowledge, understanding, friendship among the women of the Americas were based on those early goals, aimed at helping women and children. The theme which I choose for the biennium was "Women and Children, a Gift to the World" and I encouraged the Texas Tables to focus their community projects on those benefiting women and children.

It was my delight to learn that Tables across Texas were donating to children's homes, to women shelters, supplies for schools, canned food for food pantries, coats for children during the winter, diapers for infants, clothing drives and etc. I hope that this trend continues so that in our own small way we can imitate the initial purposes of our early founders.

I am also proud of the accomplishments that were state projects and that we worked together to make successful.

The visit to Florence Terry Griswold birthplace was extremely well attended and could not have happened had not so many assisted in bringing the event about.

The appointment of the former State Directors to an Ad Hoc committee to document unwritten practices by which we operate and which were in need of documenting.

We had an opportunity, along with the McAllen Table, to attend the memorial service for

our beloved former State Director Frances V. Metcalf.

The updating and revision of the state constitution that while we have continuously given it attention, there were items that were outdated and needed addressing.

Having been given the honor to serve as the official translator for the Alliance of the Pan American Round Tables which has given me an opportunity to renew old friendships and form new ones.

And lastly, assisting the San Antonio Table to plan for the PARTT 62nd State Convention.

All activities which were brought about through knowledge, understanding and friendship. As you know the popular saying “ If you have done something big you didn’t do it alone” certainly applies to the PARTT state activities. I am so thankful for all the PART members who did not hesitate to assist in accomplishing the goals that make our organization productive. I would like to believe that we all played our parts because we do it “One for All and All for One”. Until we all work together again, thank you for the great memories.

Fondly,

Rosa Maria

Thank You



*Dr. Rosa Maria Vida
State Director*

*With sincere appreciation for your
dedicated leadership, your commitment
to Pan American Round Tables of Texas
and your faithful service during your
term as State Director.*

*Your leadership has strengthened our
organization and inspired future
generations of Table members.*

Table Directors 2026



Carmen Guerra
Austin - A



Maryline Sommers
Conroe - A



Esmeralda P. Garcia
Houston - A



Malinda Cowen
Beville-B



Dianne La Rue
Corpus Christi - B



Ana Laura Castillion Ruiz
Eagle Pass - B



Diana S. Pena
Laredo - B



Sandra Brown
San Antonio - B



Idolina Vela
Alamo-San Juan-Pharr -C



Bertha G. Elizondo
Brownsville - C



Sara C. Saldana
Edinburg - C



Myrna Rodriguez
McAllen-C



Zulma Sandoval
Rio Grande City-Roma-C



Angie Gonzales
San Benito-C



Patricia Saucedo
Burdick
El Paso - D



Laura Escovedo
Fort Worth - D

Austin-A



March 2025 Spanish Coffee. (L to R) Miriam Raviv; Rosie Reyna; Kathy Sowash; Patricia Andersen; Ruth Rubio; Tulis Escobar; Laura Esparza; Marianne McKim.

April 2025 Pan-American Day.

(L to R) Laura Esparza (New Member); Marcia Lucas; Shannon Bieberdorf (New Member); Cheryl Alvarado (Committee Chair); Ruth Rubio; Miriam Raviv; Teresa Acosta.



Pan American Day. (L to R) Marcia Lucas; Ana P. Flores (PARTT Parliamentarian); Mary Gawron; Maricarmen Nasr; Mary Aldrich; Carmen Guerra; Dr. Rosa María Vida (PARTT State Director); Janet Roberts.



May 2025 Installation of New Officers. (L to R) Sylvia Williams installs the new officers: Carmen Guerra (Director); Rachel Ruiz (Assistant Director); Mary Margaret Coyle (Recording Secretary); Mary Ann Meigs (Corresponding Secretary); Mary Catherine Miller (Treasurer); Julia Subervi (Historian).

Austin-A



July 2025 National Library Week. Doing Our PART marking National Library Week at Rodriguez Elementary School by donating to

and supporting the library, a key part of our community outreach efforts. Support Our Schools Chair, Rosalia Castañeda, presents Rodriguez Principal Monica Mills and Librarian Francesca Forno Armstrong with a check for purchasing new books to further enrich the library's resources.

Scholarship Committee. Christina Aimard presents scholarships (top to bottom): **Marilia Gabriele De Melo** – University of Texas. From Brazil. **José Arce** – University of Texas, B.A. in International Relations and Global Studies. From Honduras. **Valerie Gavilanes** – Texas State University, B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Pre-Med. **First Generation Scholarship. Elena Alvarez** – University of Texas, B.S. in Applied Learning and Development.

Community Outreach

Awards. (L to R) Patti McCabe, **Casa Marianela**; Maria Laura Arabbo, **VECINA**; Ann Finch, Community Outreach Chair; Spencer Foster, **Casa Marianela**.



January 2026 Spanish Coffee – Presentation on Colombia's History, Art, Music, and Cuisine

(L to R) Angelita Mendoza-Waterhouse (Spanish Coffee Committee); Ruth Rubio (Host); Lucy Chavarria (Presenter).



Sarilee Ferguson, grandniece of Florence Terry Griswold passed away on February 25, 2025. She was the daughter of Lois Marchbanks who wrote book, "The Pan American Round Table" in 2012. She was an honorary member of the Austin Table and appeared in the PARTT Centennial video.



Houston-A



Our esteemed member, **Nelly Fraga**, sits with others member and their guests.



Christmas Posada. In December the Houston Table sponsored the posada as their major fundraiser.



Christmas Posada: Houston Table Communications Director and 50/50 Fund Chair, Julissa Martinez, Winner of the 50/50Table Director Esmeralda Pena Garcia.



PART Houston Board Members (L-R) Cinthia Milian, Catherine Louviere, Susan Huston and

Conroe-A



Beeville-B

The Beeville Table celebrated “A Chilean Christmas” during December“. The members and guests enjoyed a typical but special Chilean Christmas dinner and beverage while a pianist played Christmas carols. Eventually, everyone joined in the singing of carols and left with a complete Chilean experience. It was especially interesting to experience a summer Christmas with all the fresh fruit.



Corpus Christi-B

February Meeting. Dianna Bluntzer Sherman spoke about her great-uncle, José Gregorio Hernández Cisneros, O.F.S., a Venezuelan physician and member of the Third Order of Saint Francis, known for his charitable service to the poor. He was canonized on October 19, 2025, becoming one of the first Venezuelans recognized as a saint by the Catholic Church.



Women and Children Project. The Corpus Christi Table selected the Santa Workshop at the Ronald McDonald



House as their project. Toys were donated by Table members. Special recognition to Glenda Worthley, who donated a car full of toys and gifts for the Santa Shop. (L-R) Glenda Worthley, Karen Selim, and Diane LaRue, Table Director.

December Meeting. Members participated in a presentation on native plants at the new Table meeting location, the Shore Room at Texas A&M University.



PARTT Meeting. Diane LaRue, and Susanne Harrold, Immediate Past Director and current Parliamentarian attended the State meeting in Eagle Pass in August.

Eagle Pass - B



December Meeting. The Pan American Round Table of Eagle Pass hosted its Annual Christmas Home Tour, welcoming members of the community to celebrate the holiday season while visiting beautifully decorated homes throughout the city. Guests enjoyed festive décor, warm hospitality, and a glimpse into local traditions, making the event a memorable way to share the spirit of Christmas while supporting the Table's cultural and community initiatives.

February Meeting. Members of the Pan American Round Table of Eagle Pass gathered for a productive meeting to discuss upcoming activities, exchange ideas, and continue planning programs.



March Meeting. Members Belinda Benavidez and Cynthia Gomez hosted the meeting and presented on Venezuela. Special guest Evelin Chacin Ortiz, a native of Venezuela, shared an engaging presentation about the country's geography, culture, traditions, and personal experiences growing up in Venezuela.

Laredo-B



Installation of New Officers 2025-2027 during our May 2025 meeting. L to R: Perla Gonzalez, Gabriela Leon, Lupita Ramirez, Alicia Medina, Mary Ann Garcia, Ana Flores, Leslie Young, Elvira Jackson, Annie Ochoa, Violeta Benavides, Claudia Cabello, Melissa Garcia, Diana Peña, Kimberly Alexander, State Director, Dr. Rosa Maria Vida, (not shown: Olga Cantu).

3rd annual Peace Walk at Texas A & M International University grounds.



Visit to the Installation of the New Table Officers from Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Sitting L to R: Rebeca González, Elia Norma Barrera, Lupita Ramírez, Sandra Viñals, Magali Hinojosa.

Standing L to R: Ana Flores, State Director, Dr. Rosa María Vida, Diana Peña.



December 2025 meeting and collection of blanket to be donated.

1st meeting of 2026. Table Director Diana Peña is welcoming members and wishing them a Happy and Blessed New Year 2026.



San Antonio-B



San Antonio Members making plans for the 62nd PARTT Convention.

Standing (L to R): Sharon Gee; Jeanne Koplan; Mary Lanoue; Diana Durbin
Seated: Sandra Brown, Director.



Honoring scholarship recipients from the San Antonio College Empowerment Center Scholarship Recipients: (L-R) Corey Flores, Juan Kevin Cruz Hernandez. Representing the Empowerment Center: Bertha Castellano, Adviser; Melissa Flores-Valencia, Senior Coordinator.



Welcome to our New Table Member Diane Hall.

Scholarship Committee: Sandra Brown, Table Director and Sylvia Bolado, Scholarship Chair.



Alamo/San Juan/Pharr - C



Installation of officers, May 2025. Sandra Maxwell Assoc. Dir. along with Brownsville members Bertha Elizondo, Table Director and Marsha Bentacourt, Assoc. Dir. (L-R) Idolina Vela, Director, Delia Soza, 2nd. Assoc. Dir., Gloria Cantu, Recording Sec., Victoria Loreda , Treasurer, Corinne Conquest, Brownsville Asso. Dir. Marsha Betancourt, Teresa Y. Tijerina, Corresponding Secretary Bertha Elizondo, Brownsville Table Dir., Maria Elena Corona, Historian , Yolanda Martinez, Maria De Los Angeles "Gela" García, Parliamentarian standing for Chaplin, Blanca Garza is Minerva Salazar and Sandra Maxwell, State Assoc. Dir.

"Let There Be Peace on Earth" was the theme for the September meeting. Idolina Vela, Director introduced several activities to emphasize peace.



Donation to the Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley in December. (L-R) Philip Farias, Food Bank RGV, Gloria Cantú, Linda Chávez, Director Idolina Vela, Gela García, María Elena Corona and Arlina Larson, Food Bank RGV.



During the December meeting of the Alamo-San Juan-Pharr Table, new members were installed. They are left to right: Linda Uriegas, Sandra Gonzalez, Merle Bishop, Irma Alvarado, Gela García standing Diana Farias, Janie Cuellar, Linda Chávez, and Maricela Cortez .

Brownsville I - C

PARTT Leadership Seminar 2025, Eagle Pass. Brownsville Table members attending were (L-R) Norma McKnight, Isabel Vezzetti, Sandra Maxwell and Bertha Garza Elizondo.



PART Brownsville Scholarship Recipients Celebration, June 7, 2025. This year, the Table awarded scholarships to eighteen local high school students.



Welcoming New Members during the May Meeting. (L-R) Bertha Garza Elizondo, Table Director, New Members: Melissa Tullos, Gina Cardenas, Griselda Aldrete and Marsha Betancourt, Associate Director.



Celebrating Charro Days during the February Meeting

Edinburg - C



February Meeting



Josie Cappadona was recognized as the **PART Edinburg Woman of the Year!**



McAllen - C

October Meeting: Table members participated in a **Día de los Muertos** observance, bringing photographs of their deceased loved ones and Table members to place on a commemorative altar. (L-R) Registration Table: Diana Guerra, Treasurer and Nora Pena, Asst. Treasurer.



December Christmas Mother & Daughter Meeting. The theme was "Tree of Christmas: A Timeless Symbol". There were over a dozen Christmas trees and 120 PART members from the Valley and Mexico joined McAllen Table members.



February Meeting: In recognition of Women's Heart Health Month, Cardiologist Jorge de la Garza, M.D., and Table member Velda de la Garza, M.S., R.D., presented a program titled "Heart to Heart." Velda, McAllen Table member, has also authored several recipe books with nutritious recipes.



Women and Children Project: During the March meeting the Table presented \$1000 to Mujeres Unidas, a nonprofit organization that provides a safe haven for victims of family violence and their children. Services also include rape crisis intervention, counseling, legal advocacy, community education, and a batterers' intervention and prevention program.

Rio Grande City-Roma -C



Christmas December Meeting



September Meeting



PARTT Leadership Seminar, Eagle Pass



Book Donation



Installation of Officers

San Benito - C



Christmas Scholarship Fundraiser, December 13, 2025. Opening ceremony with Angie Gonzales, Table Director and Table members.



Christmas committee.



Thank you

to all the Texas Table members who have contributed to the **Pan Americana Texana** over the past seven years. Our efforts have created a lasting written record of our accomplishments and successes.



*Raquel Oliva
Texana Editor
Publications Committee Chair
2019-2026*

El Paso - D

2025 Pan American Day Celebration. (L-R) Leslie Beckoff, Patsy Burdick, Director, PART of El Paso.



(L-R) Denise



Caballerro, Yvonne Davis, Ginger Francis and Julie Kallman . ((L-R)

Mariana Balsiger, Nancy McKnight, Margie Melby, Sydney Burton.



(L-R) Sydney Goltz, Right, and Carolyn Breck, back and right.

(L-R) Past Directors of PART El Paso Leticia Aber and Sydney Burton.



(L-R) Margie Escudero, Mariana Balsiger.

Ft. Worth - D

November Meeting. "Honduras Threads" a non-profit organization providing sewing and embroidering jobs to Honduran women.

Front row (L-R) Kris Clay, Grace Villanueva, Guest Speakers Bill Bancroft and Kay Whelan of "Honduras Threads," Leticia Clay. Standing (L-R) Egleyda Perez, Melisa Isern, Yadira Martinez, Cheryl Ehmann, Laura Escobedo, Rosa Paulson, Ann Ekstrom, Beth Dorcas, guest Elizabeth Boston-Watts, and Kathy Ehmann-Clardy.



December meeting. Christmas Celebration & White Elephant Gift Exchange. Seated L-R: Grace Villanueva, Laura Escobedo, Kathy Ehmann-Clardy, and Rosa Paulson. Standing L-R: Jacque Resendez. Yadira Martínez, Cheryl Ehmann, Alma Crowthers, Magda Portella-Vallarino, JoAnn Jensen, and Egleyda Perez



January Meeting. Nicaragua. Seated L-R: Grace Villanueva, Beth Dorcas, Rosa Paulson, Laura Escobedo, guest Claudia Giron; Standing L-R: Diana Martínez, Alma Crowthers, Melida Isern, Kathy Ehmann-Clardy, Cheryl Dalton, Jacque Resendez, Cheryl Ehmann, Yadira Martínez, and Anelia Banda

February Meeting. Valentine's on Costa Rica. Seated L-R: Grace Villanueva, Laura Escobedo, Jacque Resendez, Karla Edwards; Standing L-R: Beth Dorcas, Diana Martinez, Melida Isern, Kathy Ehmann-Clardy, Yadira Martinez, JoAnn Jensen, guest. And Anelia Banda .





Pan American Round Tables of Texas

62nd State Convention • San Antonio

WELCOME TO SAN ANTONIO

Welcome to San Antonio and to the 62nd State Convention of the Pan American Round Tables of Texas, held in one of Texas' most vibrant and historic cities and the birthplace of the Pan American Round Tables.

This year's convention promises memorable experiences, beginning with *a scenic barge tour along the San Antonio River, followed by dining at the historic Casa Rio Restaurant located along the famed River Walk.*

We are especially pleased to welcome Alliance Director General, Marta Agüero Abal de Argañaras, members of the Alliance and the Pan American Round Tables of Texas.

In keeping with our convention theme of **Fiesta**, we invite you to embrace the colorful spirit of San Antonio and *celebrate together in festive style.*

Thank you for joining us for this special occasion. We wish you *a wonderful convention and a memorable stay in San Antonio.*

**PART of San Antonio
62nd Convention Host Table**

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