

**Pan American Round Table of Austin  
Director's Biennial Report  
March 22, 2013**

**Picture #1—Group photograph--December 2012 Luncheon at Green Pastures**

During the past 2 years, the Pan American Round Table of Austin has had many successes celebrating knowledge, understanding and friendship among the people of the Americas. The Austin Table has maintained a stable membership consisting of about 90 active members, around 15 or so associate members and about 8 sustaining members. We also have a few courtesy and honorary members.

Although we lose some members each year, we actively recruit new members and enhance our group with new talent and ideas. Last year we welcomed 11 ladies with outstanding credentials who have helped us to become more tech savvy. Our website is up and running, we have an online Newsletter called "Table Talk or Sobremesa", our luncheon reservations and registration are now computerized, and we all keep learning new tricks! This year's new members, who will be introduced during our Pan American Day celebration in April, have outstanding credentials and we look forward to our working together to accomplish the mission and goals of the Pan American Round Table.

Our Executive Committee consists of the officers and the chairs of the 15 committees on which we depend to carry out our work. Our table has 8 monthly luncheon meetings each year from October through May. This photograph was taken during our December 2012 luncheon meeting at Green Pastures, a lovely Austin estate with luscious lawns and oak trees and dozens of beautiful peacocks wandering about the grounds. In the top row, you can spot the newly elected Alliance Director, Elsie Perez and our Zone I Director, Martha Stumbo who graced us with their presence during that meeting.

**Picture #2—90th Anniversary Celebration**

The year 2012 was particularly special because it marked the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Austin Table, in January, 1922. In April, during the festivities of Pan American Day, we celebrated this milestone with a beautiful birthday cake, sangria, music and dancing.

Our Table was honored to host several PARTT state officers in 2012. The State Director, Sarah Jane Wise and the State Corresponding Secretary, Yolanda Calley attended our meeting in January and Janet Mayorga, the State Associate Director Region A, joined us during our May meeting. A frequent guest and PART Honorary Member, Rosalba Ojeda, Consul General of Mexico, participated in several of our meetings and sponsored a special presentation at our May 2012 meeting on the Battle of Puebla by renowned Mexican scholar, Dr. Gustavo Vega.

PART of Austin collaborated with Global Austin hosting two receptions for international visitors. In September, PART Honorary Member, Graciela Cigarroa, wife of UT System Chancellor,

Franciso Cigarroa, offered her beautiful home, Bauer House, for the Andean Nations/Central America Artists reception for visiting artists from Ecuador, Peru, and El Salvador. In May, we welcomed visiting librarians from Colombia with a reception at the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas.

The Scholarship Committee reviewed over 50 applications and awarded three scholarships for \$2,000 each to these outstanding students: The Charles Wilson Hackett Memorial Scholarship to Jessica Osorio, an outstanding graduate student in Latin American Studies at the University of Texas, the Jeannie Hunter Hackett Memorial Scholarship to Ricardo Palomares, an undergraduate student from Latin American at UT and the Mitty Guerra Memorial Scholarship to Edilsa Lopez, a Hispanic woman residing in Austin who has shown determination in overcoming obstacles to pursue her educational goals. This year the application process is currently underway and is now computerized and on our website!

### **Picture #3—Spanish Coffee at Lala Niemeyer’s**

Among the many activities of the Austin Pan American Round Table, the monthly Spanish Coffee is “muy popular.” These informal gatherings provide members an opportunity to use the Spanish language to get to know each other better, listen to interesting presentations, and participate in lively discussions on a variety of cultural, historic and contemporary topics. And the refreshments are great, too! In this picture taken during the November coffee at Lala Niemeyer’s home, we learned about a project that shows teachers in Mexico and the U.S. new methods to teach higher mathematics to young children. We even learned a bit of differential calculus ourselves...in Spanish!! Spanish coffees are hosted by members of the Table at their homes and organized by the Spanish Coffee Committee.

PART of Austin also supports other organizations in Austin that provide special services to the Hispanic community and immigrants. Funds amounting to \$2700 were collected from member donations, fundraisers and raffles to provide awards to three outstanding community organizations selected by the Special Projects Committee: Casa Marianela/Posada Esperanza refuge for women and children--\$1200; Manos de Cristo Dental Clinic--\$1000; and Book Spring reading program--\$500. This year, the Special Projects Committee has continued its fundraising activities—the \$100 club, a silent auction—and will be presenting checks to community groups in May.

### **Picture #4—Rodriguez School Christmas Teacher Appreciation Reception**

The Outreach Committee continued working with our adopted school, Rodriguez Elementary School, named after Hermelinda Rodriguez, the first Hispanic woman principal in the Austin Independent School District and member of our Pan American Round Table. In 2011-12 we provided funds for art supplies and judged student projects for the Science Fair. In December PART honored the teachers with a teacher appreciation breakfast, books, and raffled gifts. In May, our members organized another Career Week for the schools 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes, bringing professionals from various fields to the school to speak about their work and to encourage

students to study hard and stay in school and prepare for a future career. This year, we have repeated several of these activities, such as judging projects at the science fair, reading to students during the Dr. Seuss reading week, providing monthly support at the school library, hosting a Christmas afternoon reception for teachers with lots of goodies to eat and gift cards to raffle, as you can see in this photograph and of course, we are also having another Career Week. Our members love working with this school!

“All for One and One for All”

María Medina Seidner, Table Director

[Return to PARTT Homepage...](#)