

The idea for West Houston Evening Branch (WHEB) began in 1980, when it became apparent that many new families moving to the Houston area were settling into the west side. The women in the area wanted to be part of such a great organization, but geographically it only was practical to move the organization to the prospective members rather than the other way around. So, in February 1981, WHEB was chartered as the second branch of Greater Houston Section (Career Branch was first).

The women who came together to form WHEB shaped the branch to be what endured for the next three decades. At the time, the women were largely stay-at-home moms with school-age children. For them, it seemed most practical to become an evening branch, so that they could attend meetings and functions once husbands were home to stay with the kids. Over the years, the evening time has remained a staple of the branch, as many of those women went to work when the children were grown, and new members mostly were working women who only have evenings available.

WHEB works on projects and issues that affect the whole city and, certainly, the nation. But, it really attends to west Houston's need as often as possible. The group worked to get Holocaust education into Katy schools. The group donates food to the West Houston Area Ministries food bank and contributes school supplies through them at the beginning of the school year. It coordinates with the other Jewish organizations such as the West Houston Jewish Community center and the west Houston congregations to bring the JCC book fair to the west side. It works along-side other organizations for an annual, Women of the West program.

Most importantly, the women show appreciation to each other for all that they do. Each year at its February Birthday Party, celebrating when the branch is another year older, a member receives the Isabelle Novitt award. This award is designed to thank someone who has given of herself, her talents and her time to a WHEB project. As a legacy to a woman who made those she met feel good about themselves, the award is designed to carry on that tradition.