



Volume 36, No. 4

Five Cities – Pismo Beach (CA) Newsletter

December 2014

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<http://fivecitiespismo-beach-ca.aauw.net>

President's Newsletter: Jean Burns Slater

### **Keeping Your Mind Sharp: Leadership and You**

The holidays have arrived, providing many opportunities to connect with friends, family and new acquaintances. Often we are faced with new challenges which may include health concerns, aging parents and death in our families, lifestyle changes, a home relocation or new obligations to children and grandchildren. We, as AAUW women, cannot be helpful to anyone unless we are taking care of ourselves. A few suggestions for maintaining and possibly increasing our self care follow. Some of these suggestions may sound like old news, but they could "ring a bell", and thus become part of your current lifestyle.

**Do aerobic exercise regularly.** This is the number one activity to hold off dementia. "It's proven: Exercise makes you a better thinker, a better learner and a better manipulator of information", says John Ratey, MD, a psychiatrist at Harvard Medical School and the author of *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*. **AAUW Solution:** Set up chairs and tables for AAUW events.

**Follow a Mediterranean Diet.** A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, fish, beans, nuts, seeds, whole grains and olive oil, low in meat and saturated fats boosts the health of your heart. Recent research suggests that this type of diet also helps your brain age gracefully. The key to this diet is extra virgin olive oil, containing oleocanthal, which helps remove beta-amyloid, a protein that builds up in Alzheimer's patients. Skipping saturated fats avoids negative effects on the cardiovascular system. **AAUW Solution:** Share and enjoy healthful snacks and meals offered at AAUW meetings.

**Meditate.** Meditation can assist in developing mental focus and maintain your ability to disregard distractions. Meditations can train your brain to direct your attention where you want it, increasing mindfulness, and reducing stress. **AAUW Solution:** When the Branch President drones on and on about responsibilities of an AAUW member, it is a perfect time to concentrate and focus on the topic, setting off a meditation trance.

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**Maintain Social Ties.** People who maintain social interactions seem to retain their cognitive skills better than those who are more isolated. A Swedish study of more than 1,200 people found that those who live alone and had few close social ties faced a greater risk of developing dementia than those who maintained social contacts. **AAUW Solution:** Visit with others and engage in social events and interest sections of our AAUW branch.

**Foster New Connections in Your Brain.** The theory is that lifelong learning accumulates in your brain. "Education is protective" stated Eric B. Larson, MD, an internist who researches aging at the Group Health Research Institute in Seattle. "Every time you actively engage your mind, whether through formal education or other activities that require cognitive effort, such as reading, you're building cognitive reserves, says Charite Medical University in Berlin. It is best to challenge yourself with a completely new activity rather than keep doing the same thing over and over, says Jyoti Mishra, PhD., a brain scientist at the University of California, San Francisco and the Brain Plasticity Institute. That is because once you master something your cognitive benefits drop off." drop off." (Aschwanden, p.144) **AAUW Solution:** Become a branch leader, challenging yourself with a completely new activity such as serving as President Elect, or holding a branch office for next year such as President, Hospitality Chairperson or other office. This is guaranteed to sharpen your mind, maintain your social ties, provide mediation time, jump start the Mediterranean Diet and increase your aerobic exercise. We are waiting for you, sharp minded leader.

Article content adapted from: "#1 Way to Fend off Forgetfulness,"  
Aschwanden, Christie, *More Magazine*, October 2014

### CALENDAR — December 2014

4	Lunch Bunch	11:30 a.m.
6	Holiday Brunch	10:30 a.m.
9	Night Readers	7:00 p.m.
18	Finessing Femmes Bridge	12:30 p.m.
19	Hand and Foot Canasta	9:30 a.m.





## **December Holiday Brunch.**

**December 6, 2014 Saturday 10:30 a.m.**

Celebrate the Holidays with AAUW Branch Members from Five Cities Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo. It's the holiday season of good cheer and good will.

### **Sycamore Hot Springs Resort: Gardens of Avila Restaurant**

1215 Avila Beach De  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405  
595-7302

#### **The program includes:**

- 10:30 am Fellowship with Five Cities-Pismo Beach & San Luis Obispo Branch members
- 11:00 am Buffet Brunch
- 11:45 am Musical performance
- 12:15 pm Assembling of toiletries for San Luis Obispo Community Action Partnership:  
Please bring small containers of toiletries (such as hotel samples), wash cloths, tissues, make up, note pads, pens, pencils and small calendars for assembling, separated by product use

#### **Brunch Cost: \$25**

**Menu:** Assorted Breakfast pastries, muffins and breads      Seasonal fresh fruit and berries  
Scrambled eggs with parmesan cheese      Gardens Breakfast potatoes  
Orange juice, cranberry juice and grapefruit juice      coffee & tea

#### **Reservations required by November 24, Monday**

Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy the beautiful setting of the Gardens of Avila and the companionship of women who promote advocacy, education, philanthropy and research focusing on women.

**Questions:** 627-1845.

Please confirm your reservation with check, made out to "Five Cities-Pismo Beach AAUW"

Mail to: Co President Jean Burns Slater

3132 Meadowbrook Lane

San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

Please join us as we celebrate holiday activities with San Luis Obispo AAUW members.

### **BINGO!!!**

The first ever Bingo Event was a huge success for the branch.

The Fellowship Hall at St. John's Lutheran Church provided a bright and spacious location for the nearly 150 participants and workers.

Well over half of the membership contributed in one way or another to bring this to fruition.

This was truly a community event. One hundred and forty-seven tickets were turned in at the door, which means that at least 2/3 of the players were non-AAUW members.

Special acknowledgements go to the hard working chairs of the various committees which pulled everything together and to all their helpers, especially the husbands and friends:

Pam Zirion and Priscilla Alquist—Silent Auction; Debbie Audet and Wendy Robinson - Boutique; Karen Thomas—refreshments; Dee Carlson - Bake Sale; Gaye Peltzman, Kathi Pettersen, and Judy Zaretska - Raffle; Marilyn Corey and Patti Melsheimer - tickets.

Susan Gray and Gaye Peltzman, Co-chairs



APPRECIATE THE GIFT OF GIVING: A Smile, Your Time, A New Member

by Alice Adams Addison, Membership Vice President

Please continue to welcome our newest members with a smile: **Linda Kime, Danna Weidner and**

**Cynthia Conover!** Our branch now has 82 members, and we look forward to more soon. Please contact me with the names, addresses, and phone numbers for potential new members ([addisonauto@yahoo.com](mailto:addisonauto@yahoo.com)) or (805) 481-5556. Take one of our new brochures and invite someone to join us in any of our activities.



Make "the gift of giving season" one of welcoming others into our branch activities.

There are so many -- see within this newsletter -- and help us celebrate this our 35th year in the Five Cities. By the way, our National AAUW 133rd birthday was November 28th! As an AAUW member, you help decide the future of this great organization. We support women and girls!



### Provocative Speaker at our January Meeting

Dr. Gloria Velasquez, nationally recognized humanitarian, joins us January 19.

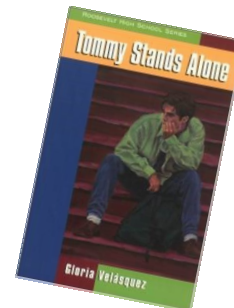
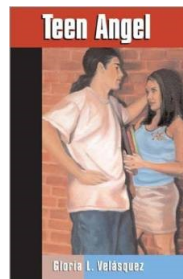
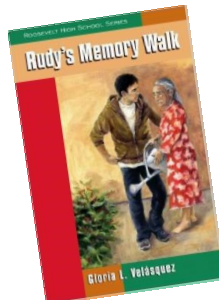
From growing up in the 50's as a child of farm workers in Colorado to earning a Ph.D. at Stanford, she calls herself, "a miracle come true." Now a professor of Modern Languages and Literature at Cal Poly, Dr. Velasquez will help us commemorate the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday by sharing her story and poetry in a presentation called Dare to Dream.



We invite community members including teenagers to our 7:00 pm Monday, January 19 meeting with Dr. Velasquez. Besides poetry, Gloria is known for writing young adult novels, "The Roosevelt High School Series", for grades 7 and up, feature characters that young people can relate to. The books deal with difficult contemporary subjects and capture the pressures and emotions that teenagers frequently experience. The use of Spanish words adds authenticity, while the glossaries help non-Spanish speaking readers put the words in appropriate cultural contexts. Some of Velasquez books of poetry and Young Adult novels will be available for purchase (price: about \$10 each) and book signing.

Stay posted to learn if we will meet in the AG Women's Club or St. John's Lutheran Church.

For a taste of Gloria's poetry, go to Black Shoes at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKArLP6Q4SQ>



**Night Readers:** The December 9 meeting of the evening Book Club will meet at the home of Susie Wedell, for a discussion of Elizabeth Strout's novel The Burgess Boys. The dramatic plot involves a family in disarray, forced to come together when one of the young nephews is accused of a hate crime. As in many of Strout's stories, the characters are from a small town in Maine, and must make choices that will alter the family dynamics. Looking ahead, the selected book for January, 2015 is How It All Began, by Penelope Lively. Members of the Book Club are reminded that the December meeting traditionally involves a book exchange. The club is currently filled to capacity.





## Women in History

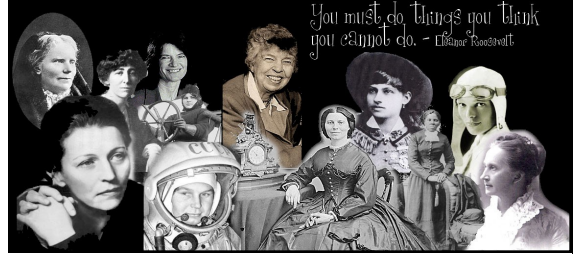
Now is the time to consider one of our most worthwhile and entertaining past times.

You can be part of history when you portray a famous woman. And, as that woman, you can give a talk of not more than 30 minutes to our group for the March meeting.

In addition you reach out to 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in the South County by speaking to their classrooms about the achievements of that famous woman. It is totally a rewarding experience. All it takes is a wee bit of courage, a little reading and a costume!! We will take care of scheduling the classrooms.

So come join us and be part of making history come alive for everyone!

Pam Ziron and Kathy Cohon



### Donations to AAUW Projects:

We received donations for Scholarship in November from the following individuals:

Rose Ann Steiner

Pat Muhlethaler

Consider giving the gift that keeps on giving to:

Scholarship

Tech Trek

AAUW Funds

RIF



### December Birthday Ladies

Nancy Kington 2

Abby Adams 12

Elin McCall 22

Dee Carlson 30



## FINESSING FEMMES BRIDGE

The December 18, 2014 meeting of the Finessing Femmes will be at the home of Pat Muhlethaler. Members are asked to bring a white elephant gift for exchange.

Mary Jo Aspinall will be the hostess on January 14th.

If you would like to be on the substitute list please



## AAUW Lunch Bunch

AAUW Lunch Bunch is an informal gathering of members who enjoy sampling local restaurants while engaging in stimulating conversation. Please consider joining the lunch group this year. All branch members are welcome to join us! Attend when it is convenient for you!

**Thursday, December 4, 2014 at 11:30 a.m.**

The Historic Santa Maria Inn  
801 South Broadway  
Santa Maria, CA

Our intimate full-service Santa Maria restaurant serves fresh and imaginative California cuisine for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Please call Susan Brazil – 474-5682 or email her at [susanbrazil@sbcqglobal.net](mailto:susanbrazil@sbcqglobal.net) with your reservation.



**Hand and Foot Canasta** Our group meets the 4th Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m. We brown bag our lunch and are usually finished by 1:00.

Our next game will be December 19 at Karen Thomas's home.

Please arrange for your own substitute if you are unable to come. Contact Debbie Audet at 550-8910 if you would like to join the group, learn how to play, or if you would like to be on our list of substitute players.



## **SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT JILLIAN VENTURA SHINES**

During the next few months the Scholarship Committee will feature some of our former scholarship recipients. Each young woman exemplifies those aspiring leaders who will promote equity and opportunities for all women.

This month we honor a real joy and inspiration, Jillian Ventura, a 2009 Arroyo Grande High School graduate. Jillian, who graduated from UCLA in 2014, is now studying International Relations at Harvard University as she works toward her law degree.

Jillian summed up her last four years:

*My first year at UCLA was fantastic. While taking pre-req courses, I joined the UCLA mock trial. I was the captain of the JV team and served as both an attorney and witness and absolutely LOVED it! I also got involved in many other organizations around campus, including high school tutoring/mentoring in underprivileged areas around LA. I even coached a boy 8-10 year old basketball team at the YMCA.*

*The summer after my first year, I studied abroad in Madrid, Spain. In Madrid, I was able to take an intensive summer Spanish/Culture course while interning for the EU office in Madrid. I was actually living in Madrid when Spain won the world cup that summer (which was amazing), and I was also able to do some traveling around Europe during the summer. It was truly an incredible experience.*

*At UCLA during my second year, I was able to declare my major. At the time I declared a major in Political Science and a minor in Global Studies. I was placed on the varsity mock trial team and, low and behold, we ended up winning the national championship that year. It was definitely one of my favorite experiences at UCLA and I was so glad to have been a part of it.*

*The summer after my second year, I accepted an internship position with the United Nations and moved to New York City. I made wonderful friends and found amazing mentors while researching and writing a thesis on the Palestinian bid for admissions into the UN. It was an incredible experience and one that solidified, for me, my interest in international relations in the Middle East.*

*My third year of college I spent abroad! Well, technically I was domestic during the fall quarter but I spent the entire year off of UCLA's campus. During my fall quarter, I 'studied abroad' in Washington, DC as part of UCLA's CAPPP program. I was able to take courses in DC while interning full time for the US Attorney's Office working jointly with the FBI on federal cases. I absolutely loved my internship and was very sad to leave. After DC, I moved to Edinburgh, Scotland! I was able to take classes through the University of Edinburgh while working full time for the Scottish Parliament. I survived an entire winter and spring quarter in Edinburgh and completely fell in love with the people and the city. It was very hard to leave Edinburgh after I had made it my home, but I know that I will be going back one day.*

*(continued on Page 9)*





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