

Presidents' Message: The Art of Giving

The Holiday Season, the Giving Season. A general meaning of giving is to transfer from one's own possession to that of another. But giving entails much more than this. Large gifting, such as donations to charitable causes, raises some interesting questions: If a staggering fortune is accumulated, such as Mark Zuckerberg's gift of a potential value of \$45 billion, how does one decide on how to give in a meaningful way? Can philanthropy salve the sting of the increasing unequal distribution of wealth? (Economist, December 12, 2015) These questions should lead us to careful thought about gifting, even if we have no staggering fortune.

There is a certain art in giving. Gifting is not random, as most people plan their gifts carefully. The artful gift reflects the disposition and sentiment of the giver and the personality and needs of the receiver. Giving can be tense at times, as we select the appropriate gift, the appropriate time and the appropriate person for each gift, carefully husbanding our resources. Gifting may be a direct emotional response. Giving can take the form of time, emotional support, money, practical items or an extravagant surprise. There is certain graciousness, a sense of caring, gratitude, sympathy, and respect when giving is artful.

The Holiday AAUW brunch, annually held in December and co-sponsored by San Luis Obispo and Five Cities Pismo Beach Branches, is a fine example of artful giving. The brunch is centered on the assembling of various toiletry items for others. The collection of toiletries is gathered throughout the year. Some participants ask others to help: dozens of toothbrushes from a dentist, wash clothes from a hotel, combs and shampoos from beauty salons. All items are gathered and packaged in attractive gift bags at the brunch, assembly line fashion. These small gifts become an artful method of giving to others in a very meaningful way. This December a record high of 173 total bags were assembled.

Within this same event, the advanced ensemble of the Central Coast Children's Choir was the musical entertainment. Four high school girls sang acapella for the brunch attendees, presenting a program that they developed themselves with their gifts of voice and time. In response, AAUW members donated \$162 to the \$100 fund provided by the two AAUW branches, totaling \$262. This was a direct response to the passion and performance of the choir members. Bell ringers Rebecca Hendricks and Judy Zaretzka artfully gave Christmas carol music entertainment with joy and enthusiasm.

Other examples of artful giving are often centered on personal passions. Giving to Tech Trek or the High School Scholarship Funds or AAUW Funds are perfect examples of artful giving. Remembering a young girl who was considered a "tom boy" for her love of insects, rocks or stars may give rise to giving to Tech Trek. The personal memory of not being able to go to a four year university because of a lack of funds may spur a gift to the Scholarship Fund. Thinking about the struggling graduate student with a small child who desperately wants to pursue a passion in technology may move an artful giver to donate to AAUW Funds.

Serving in various roles for your favorite nonprofit is true giving of your talents, energy and beliefs. Being a leader, serving as an officer, assisting with a fund raiser are all artful giving examples.

It is not just about tax deduction, it is about reaching from your heart and mind into your pocket and your calendar with available time and money, sharing your wealth of spirit and energy with others who may not have the ability, resources or skills to give. Welcome to 2016, a year of artful giving.

Co-Presidents: [Kathy Cohon](#), [Jean Burns Slater](#)



The **December Holiday Brunch**, a joint venture between San Luis Obispo and Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW Branches, was held at the First Presbyterian Church on the corner of Marsh and Morro, downtown San Luis Obispo on December 5, 2015. The Holiday Spirit of Bell Ringers Judy Zaretska and Rebecca Hendricks welcomed us into the hall.

What a treat these bell ringers gave us. Once we placed our gathered toiletries into the designated bins for assembly after the meal and program, we enjoyed the delicious buffet from Dickey's Barbecue catering; assorted barbecue meats, coleslaw, beans, rolls, relish, dessert. Who could have guessed that barbecue food at 11:00 am would taste so delicious? The excellent meal was plentiful and tenderly flavorful.

The musical performance by four young high school women from the advanced ensemble of the Central Coast Children's Choir was quite remarkable. Four young women, two freshmen, one sophomore and one senior, from various schools sang their selection of songs that kept us on the edge of our seats. Each branch contributed \$50 as a donation, but by the time the young women finished singing, \$262 was donated to the Central Coast Children's Choir.

Next it was the assembling of toiletries for San Luis Obispo Community Action Partnership. The following is a report from San Luis Branch organizer Mary Howell

"Thanks to all from both branches who joined in on the assembly, purchasing and collecting of personal care items! After our meeting filled with beautiful music and delicious barbecue, we filled the bags--so many we also filled my car! We had 148 cheerful and glittery gift bags, which were received enthusiastically at CAP-SLO's shelter. And now, with additional toiletries I wrapped up for a second delivery, our grand total stands at 173 gift bags to brighten some days--it's a record!"

A perfect way to begin the holidays: great food, delightful music and generous community action gifts. Thank you to all who attended. Collect those personal care items and see you next year.
--Jean Burns Slater

Tech Trek Committee meeting at Linda Lidberg's home Monday, January 11th at 7:00 pm. Come and help us get organized for this year's Tech Trek selections. We need school representatives that can contact the science and math teachers at the three middle schools in the Lucia Mar school district, volunteers to help interview and select the girls for the 2016 summer camp at UCSB, and helpers at the annual ice cream social in June.

RSVP to Linda. Help make a difference in the lives of young women!

Learn from Composer Ann Marie Kurrasch at the January 18 Meeting



The program for our January 18 meeting will warm our hearts. Composer Ann Marie Kurrasch will share how **Music Keeps Your Creative Spark Alive**.

As a commissioned and published composer, Ann Marie has written for diverse instruments and vocal ensembles. She was commissioned to write the Centennial song for the city of Arroyo Grande. Some of her other accomplishments include a book of piano solos and six CDs.

We will learn of Ann Marie's composition process, mainly from listening to her music. She believes that **Music speaks louder than words** and *will share how she believes music is important at all stages of life as a creative outlet.*

Remember that this year our meetings begin at 6:30 with time for greeting one another, sign-ups, and refreshments. The program will start at 7:00. Ann Marie will have CDs available for purchase.

San Luis Obispo County Interbranch Council: Upcoming Event

Our local Interbranch Council, consisting of the AAUW branches in Paso Robles, Atascadero, Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo and Five Cities Pismo Beach is sponsoring the following event and all of our branch members are invited. This is an excellent opportunity to mix and mingle with AAUW members from all over the county.

Annual San Luis Obispo County AAUW Interbranch Council Luncheon

Date and Time: February 27, 2016 (Saturday) 11:00 am -2:00 pm

Location: Madonna Inn

Menu: Italian Themed Buffet, featuring thyme and basil chicken, pasta with marinara and pesto sauces, green salad, Caesar salad, dinner roles with Raspberry Delight cake as dessert, plus a selection and tea and coffee beverage service.

Cost: \$25 per person

Program: Presenting AAUW Fellows, CA Fellowship Grant Recipients
Raffle prizes and great county wide conversations

Please save the date, listen to the announcement at our January 18 meeting and look for the flyer in the February newsletter.

Membership Vice President's Update

Hope everyone had great holidays and that you are ready to start a brand new year. Remember that if you have friends interested in joining now would be a great time as dues are decreased to \$55 till June 1st. Membership is at 75. Let's try to get to 80 by the end of the year.

– Susan Brazil, Membership VP



PUBLIC POLICY ALERT

Planning for AAUW Advocacy: Equal Pay Day 2016

The New Year will present unique opportunities and challenges as we work to advance AAUW's mission. Policy staff is working hard to ensure you have the materials and information you need for a productive year of advocacy. In most states, January 2016 will kick off with state legislatures back in session, then on to primaries and caucuses. Equal Pay Day is in April (with additional days based on race and ethnicity throughout the year), and our work will carry us all the way through to Election Day in November.

Equal Pay Day is a powerful occasion to raise awareness and organize action around the gender pay gap in your community.

Finding Something to Smile About: A 2015 Scholarship Recipient's College Report

As the Scholarship Committee works diligently to procure funds for the 2016 AAUW Scholarships, we enjoy hearing about our past recipients' progress. Olivia Galindo, our 2015 AGHS Winona Green Memorial (AVID) Scholarship recipient, has shared a few notes about her first semester at UC Davis.

Olivia writes:

"Hello, AAUW,

It is currently finals week here at UC Davis, and let me tell you, the quarter system in college moves extremely fast. I am taking four classes, and it seems that I have a midterm of some sort every other week. It definitely keeps me on my toes! I am excited to inform you that I have been very successful my first quarter at UCD. I have fallen head over heels in love with this school. I cannot even begin to describe to you how loving the atmosphere is. I have never been so exposed to an overwhelmingly diverse environment nor such a warm and welcoming environment to such diversity. Everyone is so accepting of others' personal beliefs, moral values, etc. I am still in awe. I have made many great new friends, and I know there will be many more to come.



Something new that I have done: I have joined the **UC Davis Women's Rugby** team! We are a nationally ranked (8th) club team competing against other varsity collegiate teams such as Stanford, Berkeley, Chico, and more. So far we have won every tournament in our preseason which is very exciting for me as a rookie. I love the sport, and my teammates are like family: extremely supportive and loving.

Once again, I thank you dearly for your financial support.

With your help I am able to move closer in the direction of passionately pursuing my dream of becoming a dentist, a career in which I am confident that I will be able to give back to the community that once gave to me." *Olivia Galindo*

You can donate to an AAUW Scholarship by mailing a check to Five Cities-Pismo Beach AAUW, PO Box 1604, Pismo Beach, CA 93448. Specify whether you are contributing towards a current scholarship or the endowment fund- and either for the general scholarships or the Winona Green (AVID) Scholarship.

Scholarship Donation: In December, **Andi Portney** made a donation to the Current Scholarship General Fund in honor of her daughter **Allison Portney's** graduation from Columbia University with an M.A. in Public Health. Allison was a 2009 recipient of our local AAUW Scholarship to high school senior girls. Congratulations to Allison and her proud parents!

Great Decisions 2016

Get ready for the new 2016 Great Decisions group discussions! Monday, January 25 will be our first discussion meeting of the year at the home of Mary Jo Aspinall in Shell Beach at 7:00 PM. The very timely topic will be "Middle East Alliances." If you ordered your new 2016 Great Decisions journal from Mary Jo, you can pick it up at our January 18 meeting. Check for it at the reception desk as you enter the Women's Club meeting room. The cost this year is \$22 for the book and checks should be made out to Mary Jo Aspinall. If you need to pay by cash, please plan to give that to her directly at the first discussion meeting, as she cannot be at our January 18 general Branch meeting. A short synopsis of the topics for the year can easily be found on the GreatDecisions.org website – click on 2016 topics.

AAUW Thursday Sewing Group Hostesses

RSVP: Karen Thomas

We meet at 12:30 PM (unless announced otherwise)

| | |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| 1/14 | Gaye Peltzman |
| 1/21 | Wendy Robinson |
| 1/28 | Elin McCall |
| 2/11 | Mary Weeks |
| 2/18 | Susan Gray |
| 2/25 | Priscilla Alquist |
| 3/10 | Karen Thomas (call for more info) |



Daytime Books



The Daytime Book Group will have a special meeting on Monday, January 4th at 12:30 p.m. We will have lunch at the Willow Market & Restaurant, 1050 Willow Road, Nipomo. After lunch we will discuss and select the books we will read for the year 2016.

Our regular meetings are scheduled for the first Friday of each month at 11:30 a.m. in various members' homes. If you are interested in joining our group please contact Patti Melsheimer.

Night Readers

The meeting on **January 12** will be held at the home of Sandra Ku, for a discussion on the newest novel by Harper Lee, "Go Set a Watchman." The book features characters from "To Kill a Mockingbird," now grown, with new sensibilities. It has generated quite a bit of public controversy, and should lead to interesting conversation. The book club is currently filled to capacity.

-- Sandra Ku, chairperson

Lunch Bunch

Lunch is the first Thursday of the month at 11:30. This month it falls on January 7th and we'll meet at Gina's restaurant in the Village of Arroyo Grande. Happy New Year 2016!



January---Gina's in Arroyo Grande
February--Steamer's in Pismo Beach
March--Rooney's Pub in Orcutt
April--Apple Farm in SLO
May--Ventana Grill in Shell Beach
June--Thai Village in Nipomo

July--Lovin' BBQ in Grover Beach
August--Jaffe Cafe in Arroyo Grande
September--Cracked Crab in Pismo Beach
October--Hula's in Avila Beach
November--Old Juan's Cantina in Oceano
December--Santa Maria Inn in Santa Maria

Susan Brazil – Chair Hope this helps everyone to plan ahead ;)



Hand and Foot Canasta is an American version of the original South American card game. It is easy to learn and fun to play. 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. This month it will be on **Friday, 1/22/2016** at Elin McCall's home. Call Debbie Audet if you would like to join the group or would like to be on our list of substitute players.



FINESSING FEMMES BRIDGE

Third Thursday, January 21st, 12:30pm at the home of Claire Gordon. We have no openings for new members but are always looking for subs. Interested? Call Marilyn Corey

AAUW Theater Events for 2016 COME **PLAY** WITH US!

If paying for more than one play, be sure to indicate the number of tickets for each event. All checks should be written to AAUW FIVE CITIES-PISMO BEACH and mailed to me: Judy Zaretzka, 529 Starlight Ln, Arroyo Grande 93420-4157 judyyoung@hotmail.com

Jan. 9 8 PM **Mark Twain Tonight** CalPoly PAC \$46.00 deadline Jan. 3
or phone PAC box office 805-756-4849 for other ticket prices and reservations
Now Hal Holbrook is at the age where he really "is" Mark Twain!
I have seen Hal Holbrook's Mark Twain at least twice, maybe three times.
This truly should be on every literate American's bucket list.

Jan. 29 7 PM **Little Women** SLO Little Theater \$22.00 deadline Jan. 10
performed by the youth theater actors



January Birthdays

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Judy Zaretska - 4 | Jean Burns Slater - 4 | Bette Kulp - 5 |
| Mary Matakovich - 14 | Joan Knowlton - 15 | Judy Leonard - 22 |
| Claire Gordon - 23 | Liz Wineman - 23 | |

January 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|---|---|-----------|---|---|--|
| | | | | | New Year's Day 1  | 2 |
| 3 |  Daytime Books 12:30 AM | 5 | 6 |  Lunch Bunch 11:30 AM | 8 | Mark Twain Tonight 9  SLO PAC 8pm |
| 10 |  science & math camp for girls Committee Meeting 7:00pm |  Night Readers 7:00 PM | 13 |  Stitch 'n 11:30am | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | Martin Luther King Day General Meeting Women's Club 6:30 PM | 19 | 20 |  Bridge 12:30pm | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | Great Decisions 7:00pm | 26 | 27 |  Stitch 'n 11:30am | 29 | 30 |
| | | | | | Little Women SLO Little Theater 7:00 PM | |

AAUW Theater Plan-Aheads

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Feb. 19 | 7:00pm | Cabaret | SLO Little Theater | \$22.00 | <u>deadline Jan. 18</u> |
| Mar. 3 | 7:00pm | The Glass Menagerie | PCPA | \$20.00 | |
| Apr. 19 | 7:30pm | Menopause (Musical) | CalPoly | \$42 and-up | |
| May | TBA | Across the River | Great American Melodrama | | |
| Jun. 3 | 7:00pm | Bye, Bye, Birdie | SLO Little Theater | | |
| Jun. 22 | Matinee | Shrek--The Musical | PCPA | | |

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