



NOVEMBER 2020

The

EQUITY FOR ALL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FIVE CITIES PISMO BEACH, CA, BRANCH



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AAUW MEETINGS

PLEASE NOTE: Our Board and General Branch Meetings will be held on Zoom until further notice.

Contact Pam Zirion for any required Zoom assistance.

LOOKING AHEAD

ZOOM MEETINGS:

- Board Meeting ..... Nov 9 @ 6:30
- General Meeting .... Nov.16 @ 6:30
- Board Meeting ..... Dec. 7 @ 6:30  
(No General Meeting in December)
- Board Meeting ..... Jan. 6 @ 6:30
- General Meeting .... Jan. 20 @ 6:30

Waves

NOVEMBER GENERAL ZOOM MEETING PREVIEW



This month, we welcome back Michelle Clark, Health Education Specialist for San Luis Obispo County. In case you missed it, Michelle spoke to us in January about ‘Healthy Aging.’ At our November zoom meeting, Michelle will speak on something a lot of us could use right now... **Positive Thinking!**

SYNOPSIS:

“Most of us have had someone say, ‘Think positive!’ or ‘Look on the bright side,’ when something didn’t go quite right. As difficult as that may be to hear, there is some truth to it.

Positive thinking reduces stress and you can enjoy life more!

Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life most worth living. In this presentation, we will focus on positive events and influences in life.

Moreover, we will discuss what stress is, how to recognize common stress symptoms, and how positive psychology can help you manage them.

Why is this important? Because stress that's left unchecked can contribute to many health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes.”

Michelle Clark, M.S. Kinesiology  
Health Education Specialist, County of SLO  
Health Education Instructor, Cuesta Community College

PRESEDENT'S MESSAGE

November – a month for Thanksgiving...

- Please remember the little moments that are given to us as gifts and how we choose to respond to them.
- Please share these gifts with those you love.
- Remember to call fellow members whenever you can to just share special times.
- Also, **VOTE!**
- And a saying for you for this month from the Dalai Lama:

*“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive.”*

~ Susan Brazil

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

The AAUW Five Cities-Pismo Beach Branch is delighted to wish a very HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following members:

Sharon Lowell .....	10
Wendy Robinson .....	10
Connie Rodgers .....	21
Andi Portney .....	23

*Happy Birthday*



## FROM THE HEART

The Branch would like to keep the following members in our thoughts and prayers this month:

Marilyn Corey

Sandra Ku

Liz Wineman

Kathi Pettersen

It is with sadness to note the recent passing of former Branch Member, Marilyn "Lynn" Titus.

Lynn was a very active member supporting all fundraisers, e.g. - the annual Book Sale and Scholarship, which at that time was a committee.

*~Pat Muhlethaler*

## OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING IN REVIEW

President Susan Brazil opened the October General Branch meeting at 6:30 PM, attended by 24 AAUW members on Zoom.

**Fundraising** is on hold except for manning the polling place for 4 days along with SLO AAUW members. We hope to net ~\$3,000, thanks to our volunteers.

**Tech Trek** is on hold until January. If they decide to run a virtual event, do we want to participate?

**RIF** has 1,000 books to distribute. Wendy Robinson is checking into how to get these books to the students.

The October program led by Kathi Pettersen, was on **Scholarship**. She began by giving her long history of being involved with AAUW Scholarships.

At the moment, 11 AAUW members are serving as directors on the Scholarship Board. The committee could use one more director.

Schools have already been contacted. More details will be decided on in November.

Detailed Scholarship information and sample applications were emailed to the members prior to the meeting.

Treasurer Maurina Kusell reviewed the Scholarship history. The goal is to keep a \$100,000 endowment fund and award scholarships on the yield, which is approximately \$4,000/year. In 2020, our branch was able to award 6 scholarships of \$1,500.

Maureen Kelly discussed the application process. Applications will be available online in early December for the three high schools, with the due date in early March. Applications will be reviewed and narrowed down by the Board.

After the Scholarship Committee has chosen the interviewees, interview dates will be set up in early April - probably on Zoom.

Scholarship winners will be asked to attend Five Cities' AAUW April General meeting to accept the scholarship certificate and to share personal and educational goals with members.

Next month's meeting will be led by Michelle Clark, who will speak on Positive Thinking. Michelle spoke to us last January about Healthy Aging.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 by Susan Brazil.

## ELECTION NEWS

Five Cities Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo Branches will be staffing the Voter Service Center at the Old San Luis Obispo Airport on Saturday, October 31st; Sunday, November 1st; Monday, November 2nd, and Tuesday, November 3rd.

An entirely new format for voting in person, as well as depositing 'Vote By Mail' ballots has been planned due to the corona virus pandemic.

Eight current members, two former members, and ten family and/or friends will be welcoming voters to this new experience in addition to three members who will work all four days.

*~Linda Lidberg*

## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Kathi Pettersen, VP of the AAUW Scholarship Corporation, sent an email in August to each of our 6 scholarship recipients. In part, it stated:

We, the Directors of the Scholarship Board, would appreciate knowing how your college experience is developing this fall. If time permits, would you kindly reply to this email describing:

- 1) *What college you are attending?*
- 2) *At home or on campus residency?*
- 3) *Distance learning or classroom?*
- 4) *Your ability to get the classes you need?*
- 5) *How life as a freshman today is different from that which was previously known?*

### **Gesenia Echeverria** (Arroyo Grande High School, AVID)

Hello, Mrs. Pettersen, hope all is well. Thank you for your kind and uplifting words, I certainly plan to keep my determination and eyes set forward towards my goals as I enter my first year of higher education. As for this entirely new college experience that will be held online, here are my answers:

- 1) I will be attending UCLA, University of California, Los Angeles, majoring in Human Biology & Society.
- 2) I will be starting at home, but hopefully will move on campus if the situation permits.
- 3) Distance learning
- 4) I will be having my orientation soon, the first week of September, and with my acceptance to their PEER program, I will be having great help to sign up for classes and create my schedule.
- 5) Life as a freshman is unconventional, but our education in today's world is thankfully very accessible. While it is a little challenging and unusual, moving our classrooms and extracurriculars online has been a very welcoming experience, one that will definitely make a mark on my memory, and teach me to overcome more challenges for future obstacles, especially those involving technology. Hopefully, these interesting experiences as a freshman studying purely online will prepare me as one of tomorrow's leaders, and although I am saddened at the idea of not being on campus, I will definitely be prepared for more challenges and will try to enjoy this new and interesting way of continuing my education.

Thank you once again for this scholarship opportunity.

Best regards, Gesenia Echeverria

#### **Gesenia sent a follow up note in October:**

Hello! I am still pursuing my goal of being a medical professional (M.D). I am currently a Human Biology & Society major (UCLA) with the intention of minoring in public health in the near future. I am also enrolled in the PEERS program (Program for Excellence in Education and Research in the Sciences), that aims for under-represented STEM

*(continued on the right)*

students to achieve success during their 4 years at UCLA, while preparing them for futures in graduate school, medical school, etc. Currently, I am a week into my fall quarter and so far, everything is going well, and I am still very excited for this fall quarter to continue unraveling as I feel more motivated and energized than ever.

I hope you have a great day and take care!

Warm regards, Gesenia Echeverria

### **Taylor MacCuish** (Arroyo Grande High School)



Dear Mrs. Pettersen,

I would love to give you some feedback and answer your questions.

- 1) I am attending William Jessup University
- 2) Campus Residency
- 3) Hybrid learning - both distance learning and classroom
- 4) I was able to get all of the classes I need
- 5) Life as a freshman is obviously way different than what I thought it would look like a few months ago for a number of reasons. Covid-19 has changed my college experience in the fact that some of my classes are held online and I have to wear masks all around campus. Also, as a volleyball player, my season (which usually occurs in the Fall semester) has been pushed back until Spring.

Hopeful my answers help! And thank you again so much for the opportunities you have helped me achieve.

Thanks, Taylor MacCuish

#### **And her October follow up note:**

Hello! I am majoring in Kinesiology and minoring in Bible and Theology. I am doing well here at William Jessup and am staying busy with volleyball and school, but I am really enjoying my experience here so far!

Taylor MacCuish

## SPOTLIGHT ON MAUREEN KELLY



Imagine, arriving at Arroyo Grande in a VW bug with all your possessions, to begin teaching with the Lucia Mar Unified School District in 1974. Teaching jobs were hard to come by and after living in San Francisco, as a city girl, you were ready to move on. Your parents are well educated and you are the oldest of five children, the trend setter. Your Palo Alto childhood was idyllic, summers at a cabin in Fallen Leaf Lake near Tahoe, private school for your first 10 years of education, loving parents with an expectation of independent and well-educated children. Your aspiration was to attend UC Berkeley, but you ended up at UC Davis. You immersed yourself in the French language through a year in Aix-en-Provence, France, transferring all credits toward your undergraduate degree, declaring art, French as majors and History as a minor.

Post-graduation you lived in San Francisco for two years, working at a French restaurant, a plant store, among other jobs. You decided to earn a teaching credential at San Francisco State. After an interview at the college placement center you were hired for Lucia Mar USD, with one week to move, begin your teaching job and meet the Central Coast of California.

Once in Arroyo Grande, you were ready to teach after finding a studio apartment, but missing San Francisco, where you returned each weekend for the lively life. You eventually settled in on the Central Coast, made friends, taught at Paulding Junior High for 4 years, then 5<sup>th</sup> grade, back to Junior High, eventually teaching at the high school level for more than 20 years, enjoying your students at every level, always gaining their admiration and respect.

You earned a Master's in Education Administration with the intention of using it in the future. You married a musician, purchased a home in San Luis Obispo with your husband, who played the guitar and harmonica locally and you parented your first child, Jacqueline. Complications with the birth and unexpected death of your second child, Sara, shifted your focus. Still wanting another child, you and your husband were thrilled with the birth of your son, Michael. However, your marriage dissolved, you became a single mother, and decided that you did not need the responsibility of being a school administrator.

You returned to your birth name, Kelly, and proceeded with your teaching career, job sharing at the high school level and then again full time. You raised your children in San Luis Obispo, with a stable home life of 22 years in the same home. You married again for a short time when the children were teenagers, divorced, and sold your home in

SLO and moved to Nipomo, once again exerting your independence.

Outdoor hiking, traveling, training and completing a triathlon and participating in a half marathon to raise money for World Vision charity, helped you stay in shape and enjoy life. Kayaking on a calm lake became one of your favorite activities. Concerts at Mission Plaza, theater, music, good friends, hiking, all serve as important aspects of your life! But travel has been your keen interest since high school and a dream come true when you, as a 20-year-old, lived in France and traveled throughout Europe, including a trip to Istanbul and Israel.

After 35 years with Lucia Mar School District, you retired. You now have the time and energy to travel. After retiring, you traveled back to Aix-en-Provence, South Korea to visit your daughter when she was living there, and went on a great tour of China, trips to Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica, several trips to Italy, and a fabulous tour of Morocco last year. And now you are very ready to go traveling in 2021. When not traveling, you provide dog-care for 2 grand dogs and are expecting a grandchild in the near future.

You love where you live, and want others to enjoy life, stay healthy, be kind, generous, and fair, travel much and be a world citizen when travelling, appreciative of cultures and habits of the local populace.

Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW is so fortunate to have this marvelous woman, **Maureen Kelly**, as a member of our Branch, serving as a Director for the Scholarship Corporation, our Hospitality Host, and a delightful friend. Thank you, Maureen, for sharing your story with us.

~ Jean Burns Slater

## The Waves

...is a monthly newsletter of the  
Five Cities Pismo Beach, CA,  
Branch of AAUW

**Vol. 42, No.3 – November 2020**

**President:**

*Susan Brazil*

**Treasurer:** *Linda Lidberg*

**Secretary:** *Pat Mulethaler*

**Parliamentarian:** *Rose Ann Steiner*

**AAUW Funds:** *Mary Matakovich*

**Public Policy:** *Jean Burns Slater*

**Membership:**

*Laurie King*

**Fund Raising:**

*Pam Zirion*

**Program Committee:**

*Mary Matakovich and Liz Wineman*

**Communication / Publicity:**

*Sandra Ku, Email Blast*

*Linda Lidberg, Website*

*Priscilla Alquist, Outreach*

**Newsletter Editor:** *Gayle Turner*

**IBC Representative:** *Linda Lidberg*

Newsletter deadline is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the  
month. Photos are welcome.

**AAUW 5 Cities Website:**

[https://fivecitiespismo-beach-  
ca.aauw.net](https://fivecitiespismo-beach-ca.aauw.net)

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

## SCHOLARSHIP

This month, the scholarship board of directors highlights two more recipients of local scholarships for 2020.

Your donations are welcome for 2021 scholarships or for the endowment. Donation form can be found on the branch website.

Thank you!

~ *Kathi Pettersen*,  
CEO - Five Cities Pismo Beach  
Scholarship Corporation

## TECH TREK

Tech Trek 2021 will be virtual. Many of the locations that host the camps will not be available and both the National and State organizations have made the decision to offer a virtual Tech Trek next summer.

Information about the program will be given to Tech Trek coordinators after the first of the year. At that time, our Board will discuss whether or not our branch will participate in this new format.

~ *Linda Lidberg*

## FUNDRAISING

### The B & SA Fundraiser that wasn't

Our Bingo and Silent Auction (B & SA) Fundraiser had been scheduled for Saturday, October 17. It didn't happen because of Covid. We will have another opportunity for this fun event next Fall.

Thank you for all your support through the years for this Fun-Raiser. We have enough funds to take care of our financial commitments for this membership year. ...And 2021 will be better.

And thank you all.

~ *Cheers, Kathy Cohon and Pam Zirion*



### Three ways to help motivate civic engagement, even in a time of lockdowns and social distancing.

#### Voting Rights are not just for this election, but for every election!

BY ROBIN LUCAS, AAUW GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY MANAGER

Involvement in the political process is always important, but it is especially so now as we move toward the 2020 election and any future elections. In addition, voter rights and election education does not stop on November 3. Elections are instrumental in our democratic process, so constant education is a must for informed voters beyond November 3. Remember your vote today and in the future is of utmost importance. Your informed influence on others is key for informed voting.

#### Voter Access

Voting is a fundamental American right, yet exercising that right isn't always easy. Certain jurisdictions attempt to restrict voting under the guise of preventing "voter fraud," even though that is an extremely rare occurrence. Rather than restrict voting, we need to prioritize expanding options for casting a ballot, particularly as the pandemic threatens to hinder some voters' ability to turn out at the polls on a single day. There is no "one-method-fits-all" approach to voter access: Early voting, voting by mail and no-excuse absentee voting should all be offered as options, in addition to in-person voting on November 3, with appropriate public health safety precautions.

**How you can help:** Start by making a simple phone call to your [governor](#), [Secretary of State](#) and the state [Board of Elections](#). Ask two critical questions: 1.) Is an absentee ballot available so that I can vote safely during the public health crisis? 2.) What is being done to ensure safe and broadly accessible elections for all? Tell these officials you are a constituent and that you are concerned that the upcoming elections won't be conducted in a way that will allow all voters to participate.

On a federal level, call your [Senator](#) to let them know you support the [Voting Rights Advancement Act](#) of 2019. The bill was passed by the House in December and is now before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. It calls for reviewing voting changes in jurisdictions nationwide, focusing on measures that have historically been used to discriminate against voters.

#### Getting Out the Vote

Increasing voter turnout is a top priority for the 2020 election. The more people who vote, the better our representative democracy will function. You can help get out the vote (GOTV) by making sure that all eligible voters are registered (and their registration is current) and that they know how and where to cast their ballot. As election day draws closer, check to see if voters have all the information they need: Do they know which polling places are open and ready for people to go in safely? Are they able to request an absentee ballot, and if so, have they requested it by their jurisdiction's deadlines? Do they know how send in the ballot itself and by what day it needs to be postmarked? These are critical questions to ask ourselves and our communities.

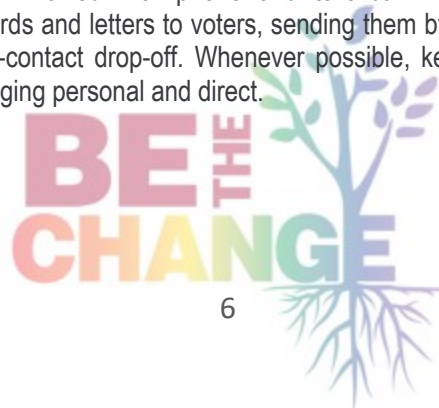
**What you can do:** Personal connections are most effective to inspire voters, but in this current environment, traditional efforts like door-to-door canvassing are not advised. Instead, use targeted phone calls and social media outreach. Connect with activists in your community to get involved with phone and text banking. Write postcards and letters to voters, sending them by mail or via no-contact drop-off. Whenever possible, keep your messaging personal and direct.

#### Voter Education

The more voters know about the candidates we elect – and where they stand on important issues – the more likely we are to choose leaders whose views align with our own. This is the time to start direct conversations about specific voter issues and help people understand what's at stake.

Use such resources as the American Association of University Women's 2020 [Voter Issue Guide](#), which provides information on key issues like the gender pay gap, family leave and paid sick days, college affordability, campus sexual violence, voting rights, and health care and reproductive rights.

**What you can do:** In addition to educating yourself on what's at stake in the 2020 election and future elections, you can help educate others by partnering with advocacy groups or like-minded people in your community to host an "Issues Forum." These can be panel discussions with experts, tele-town halls with candidates, or even a smaller conversation within your social network. Invite people you know who would be interested, and ask them to invite their friends. Learn where your local candidates stand on the issues, prepare a list of questions to get the conversation started. Take information from our resources, (virtually) gather voters in your communities, and remind everyone that our economic security, education, and reproductive & general health are essential to this democracy.



## INTEREST GROUPS

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to Covid guidelines, most meetings/interest groups that meet face-to-face have been CANCELLED until further notice. We encourage your groups to try online options to stay connected, such as Group Facetime and Zoom, or by other social distancing options.

### GREAT DECISIONS: PREPARE TO DISCUSS THE WORLD

Great Decision participants have shared two Zoom discussions and are preparing to hold two discussions in November and one in December to finish out the year. Zoom invitations are sent out to each participant and there has been active and meaningful involvement.

Participants have the opportunity to view the DVD presentations that were typically presented during the hosted meetings through an internet link. Great Decisions Zoom meetings are limited to 40 minutes, so preparation prior to the meeting is requested.

Future topics include:

- **China's Road into Latin America** November 2, Monday 7 pm  
~ Jean Burns Slater, leader
- **The Philippines & the U.S.** November 23, Monday 7 pm  
~ Kathi Pettersen, leader
- **Artificial Intelligence & Data** December 14, Monday 7 pm  
~ Susan Opava, leader

Thank you for joining in the world discussions of Great Decisions and recognizing the importance of community conversations of global events and topics.

#### Official AAUW Interest Group Contacts:

Great Decisions Priscilla Alquist / Jean Burns Slater  
Lunch Bunch Joan Knowlton  
Night Readers  
Book Group Sandra Ku  
Theatre Goers Judy Zaretska

#### Independent AAUW Interest Group Contacts:

Cooking Group Lisa Walker  
Daytime Page Turners Jean Burns Slater  
Finessing Femmes Marilyn Corey  
(Bridge Group – needs one more member)  
Quilters Linda Lidberg  
(These groups have become independent of AAUW in order to be inclusive of readers who are no longer members.)

## AAUW BRANCH SPONSORS

*Thank You*  
to all of our Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW Sponsors!

