

### In This Issue

Volume 42 – Number 8

- President's Message ..... 1
- Looking Ahead ..... 1
- Annual Meeting ..... 1
- March Meeting Review ..... 2
- March Birthdays ..... 2
- Care Corner ..... 2
- Public Policy ..... 3 & 4
- Sponsors ..... 4 & 8
- Spotlight ..... 5
- AAUW Bylaws Amendment .. 6
- National AAUW Discussion .... 7
- Interest Groups / Sponsors .... 8
- Membership ..... 8

# WAVES

### OUR MISSION:

Advancing gender equity through research, education, and advocacy.

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### LOOKING AHEAD

Well, it's April and the month of our annual meeting. This will be an important meeting and I'm hoping you will all join us on the 19th via Zoom, when we present our scholarship winners. Also, at this meeting we will be voting in our slate of officers and dues increase.

National increased the dues by \$3 this year and projected another \$2 increase next year. Our branch is asking for your vote to increase dues by \$5 this year and no increase next year. This would give our branch an additional \$2 per member for this year. Also be aware that National will be asking for your vote regarding membership requirements.

This is a great time to be involved and maintain safety for everyone. Happy Easter to everyone! Hope to see you soon.

*~ Love and Peace, Susan Brazil*

PLEASE NOTE: Board and General Branch Meetings will be held on ZOOM until further notice. For Zoom help, contact Pam Zirion.

☆☆☆

**April 5**  
Monday @ 6:30  
BOARD Meeting

**April 19**  
Monday @ 6:30  
ANNUAL Meeting

Election of officers,  
Scholarships, Bylaws.

☆☆☆

**May 3**  
Monday @ 6:30  
BOARD Meeting

**May 17**  
Monday @ 6:30  
GENERAL Meeting

Installation of Officers

### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ☆ APRIL 19 ☆ 6:30 PM

Don't miss this important and rewarding meeting. On the agenda is election of officers for 2021-22 and a vote for an increase of \$2 for our branch for next year.

Best of all, we will meet our scholarship recipients for 2021. The Scholarship Committee has continued to work diligently over the past year. They received a total of 18 applications from Arroyo Grande, Nipomo, and New Tech High Schools, including applications from AVID students.

One of the \$1500 scholarships will be awarded in honor of Marilyn Corey, who served so long on the committee. Interviews will be March 31 and April 1, so join us to meet the awardees.

Look for your Zoom invitation and tune in!

## MARCH 16<sup>th</sup> GENERAL MEETING REVIEW

**Women in History Month** was highlighted with a presentation from two of our SLO County Supervisors - **Lynn Compton** (District 4 - Arroyo Grande, unincorporated Oceano and Nipomo, and parts of Edna Valley) and **Dawn Ortiz-Legg** (District 3 - 61% of SLO, as well as Edna Valley, Avila, Pismo and Grover Beach).

**Lynn** introduced herself as being from Indiana, studying at Perdue and obtaining a BS degree in Ag. She has worked for both a Fortune 500 company and a private industry. She became involved politically, and later received a law degree, though she has never practiced law. Someone suggested she run for Supervisor in 2015. She did, and she won! When asked how she managed in male-dominated work situations, she said there has been disharmony, but she finds she is able to agree to disagree, and she goes with her gut.

**Dawn** is originally from Illinois. She studied International Business and Electronics from Pepperdine University. In 2006, she said she studied International Public Policy with Johns Hopkins University at their Bologna, Italy, campus, where she received her Master's degree, with an emphasis in climate change.

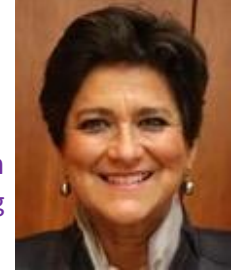
Dawn ran for State Assembly in 2016 but lost. With her land use background, she worked for Planning Commissioner Adam Hill. When he died, the Electricians Union asked her to run for his place. She was chosen by Governor Gavin Newsom to be appointed as County Supervisor, where she serves with Lynn.

Lynn talked about her major issue, Diablo Canyon. With its closure, the county will suffer a \$77 million loss, along with 1,500 jobs. She is concerned about Covid and the health of people and businesses. Other concerns are the closing of Phillips 66 and the huge homeless issue.

Dawn is also concerned with the closing of Diablo Canyon, since it provided so much revenue. The county will have to shift and transition to cover the loss. She is concerned for the women who are paying for childcare, which they can't afford, and wants to keep this in the forefront of her challenges. When asked how to make smart choices, she said the County has taken Diablo money and wants to turn it into housing for the homeless. They have identified parking lots with restrooms, and are working on community outreach. There are many levels of need.



Lynn Compton



Dawn Ortiz-Legg

**Question:** *Did you feel discriminated against by men throughout your career?*

**Lynn** - "I never felt different, except with the Amish." She said that once she proved herself, she overcame it. She feels there is a movement to put women in positions that set them up to fail. She has had to listen to many off-color jokes, but she never challenged it. She said she never feel that she was disadvantaged. She feels she has had more issues with women than with men.

**Dawn** - She said she got used to it, ignoring the marginalization. She learned from her mistakes. She thinks that younger women are more sensitive. For example, her style rubs her daughter the wrong way. Dawn said she lets things roll off her, and that a sense of humor helps.

Both agreed that there is more pressure today with all of the social media available to our society.

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS



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

- Patti Melsheimer .....6
- Margaret Quandt.....18

## CARE CORNER

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

**Marilyn Corey** - fell on 3/16, broke her femur, and spent time in the hospital.

**Sandra Ku** - It is with sad news that we must report that our member, Sandra Ku, has passed away. Sandra fought a valiant battle with cancer, but lost her fight on March 20<sup>th</sup>. As soon as we have information about a memorial or services, we will share those with you.

## What government, employers and the rest of us can do.

by Claire Cain Miller

Feb. 4, 2021 - New York Times (condensed)

When schools shut down last spring, parents (mostly mothers) began frantically sharing lists — color-coded schedules, lesson plans and links to educational activities to keep children occupied and stimulated. It was an immediate, tacit acknowledgment that help was *not* on the way. They knew it would be up to them, alone, to figure out how to do at least three full-time jobs at once — parent, teacher and the job they were paid to do.

Nearly a year later, mothers need support more than ever — in the form of government policies, employer assistance or, closer to home, partners who share in more of the work. They also need it for the future, to ensure that they are never left stranded like this again. It's not just mothers who need support, of course — fathers, grandparents and those caring for sick or aging relatives do, too. But mothers have shouldered the extra load.

"Instead of a structural solution and policies, we've relied on the unpaid labor of women, who are at a breaking point," said Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, chief executive of MomsRising, a policy and activist group.

"People talk about how moms can lift a car off their children, but even though you can do it, it doesn't mean you didn't do damage to your body when lifting the car," said Betsey Stevenson, an economist at the University of Michigan who advises policymakers on issues affecting women and families. "2020 was like lifting a car off your kids; 2021 is going to have to be 'How are those women able to heal?'"

### **How employers could help**

Many employers responded to the pandemic by allowing people to work flexible hours from home or to rearrange their shifts by using nights, weekends and every minute they aren't caring for children. But as the pandemic continued, it became clear that this solution was not sustainable.

### **Offer part-time schedules or unpaid leaves.**

In the United States, it's unusual for white-collar employers to offer part-time schedules — and they pay disproportionately less when they do. But European countries with laws requiring that workers be able to go part time have been better able to keep women in the work force.

### **Pay for child care.**

At this point in the pandemic, mothers don't just need time; they need money. They could use it in the way that best suits their family — for child care, tutoring or to support themselves during an unpaid leave. But few companies have paid for child care.

### **Don't penalize people for caregiving.**

When it comes time for employee evaluations, managers should keep in mind how much additional work — and stress — people have been dealing with. (This goes for non-parents, too) Additionally, hiring managers should not discard résumés with pandemic-era gaps, and consider rehiring the employees who left for caregiving reasons.

### **Don't go back to "normal" office life.**

Long hours of face time and unpredictable schedules hurt parents and others even before this crisis. A lesson of this period has been discovering that people are happier, healthier and more productive when they have control over where and when they work — especially parents. There are benefits to offices, but employers could adopt hybrid schedules, allowing people to work some days at home and some days at the office.

### **How government could help.**

The United States is the only rich country without paid family leave, and one of few without subsidized child care. If it had those policies in place pre-pandemic, parents' lives during lockdown would have been much easier.

In Sweden, for example, new parents get 16 months of paid leave to use until their child is 8, so some have been drawing on it during the pandemic. Parents also have four months of paid leave to take care of sick children up to age 12, which the government allowed people to use when schools were closed during the pandemic. In many European countries, child care centers are publicly funded, so there was no doubt they would still be available when it was safe to reopen.

### **Extend coronavirus paid leave.**

President Biden's coronavirus relief package includes more than three months of paid sick and family leave, including to care for children or older adults, available through September. Nearly all American workers would be eligible.

### **Send money to parents.**

In addition to stimulus checks, the Biden administration has proposed additional help for families with young children — including a tax credit of up to \$8,000 for families to spend on child care. The child tax credit, which nearly all parents collect, would also temporarily increase — to \$3,000 for children under 18 and \$3,600 for children under 6, up from \$2,000 per child. And parents of the 27 million children in the poorest families, who don't currently qualify for the full credit, would be able to collect it.

*(continued on page 4)*



**Offer tax credits to businesses that retain or rehire mothers.**

A shocking number of mothers, disproportionately those who are Black or brown, have given up jobs to take care of children during the pandemic. It would help them — and benefit employers, too — if companies hired them back. Tax credits could provide more incentive to do so.

**Give Social Security credits for unpaid caregivers.**

Career pauses shrink women’s retirement savings and Social Security benefits. The government could provide tax credits and Social Security credits for unpaid caregivers that could provide relief for mothers unexpectedly pushed out of the work force during the pandemic.

**Open schools.**

In many American communities, bars, restaurants and gyms have opened first. Prioritizing schools — which President Biden called on Congress to spend \$130 billion to do — would require getting infections under control, testing and tracing to monitor outbreaks and investing money for schools to add safety measures. The money would be used for things like improving ventilation; hiring janitors, nurses and counselors; and operating summer schools.

**Make the solutions permanent.**

The child care crisis during the pandemic has revealed the extent to which mothers were barely hanging on in normal times. Some lawmakers have proposed bills that would provide paid family leave and subsidized child care for the long term.

**How individuals could help.**

Women have always done more of the child care and housework. They’ve also done more of the invisible labor, particularly when it comes to worrying about and planning for their children’s health and education. But the pandemic has made it undeniable that raising children is, and always has been, a community endeavor — and mothers need their communities now more than ever.

**Men, do your part.**

While mothers and fathers have both increased the amount of time they spend on child care during the pandemic, the share they each do hasn’t changed all that much. There are concrete ways men could do more: Work in the common area of the home and give the separate home office, if you have one, to the woman. Take over an entire child-related task, like coordinating pediatric care, communicating with the school or planning a virtual birthday party. Get the children out of the house.

**Friends, do your part.**

If you don’t have children at home, think of ways to help those who do. Set up a meal train. Offer to take children for a distanced park walk or read to them on Zoom. Mail an activity kit. (Just make sure it’s one that doesn’t require much adult involvement.)

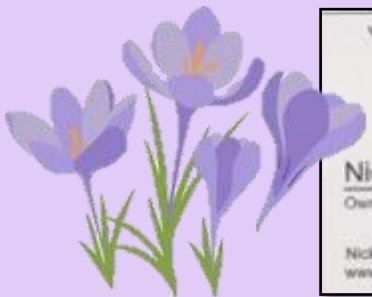
**Community, do your part.**

Some places have started programs to connect child care providers or tutors with families that can’t afford to hire them. Local governments could also help parents by creating more family activities outdoors, where it’s safer — designating pedestrian streets, keeping playgrounds open, or hosting library story times or gymnastics classes in parks.

**When it’s all over, give mothers a break.**

Mothers have heard the reminders to make time for themselves, but it’s laughably impossible for most mothers to get enough of a respite right now — and as Professor Stevenson said, “There’s no bath that can do it.” Perhaps a post-pandemic government-funded spa week for mothers is too much to ask. But in a post-Covid world, mothers would also benefit from a night in an empty house, a connection with a good therapist or a child-free day off with friends.

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## SPOTLIGHT ON LINDA KIME

Any introduction to Branch member Linda Kime must include her skills in writing for the South County Historical Society. Linda's topics for the quarterly newsletter include biographies of Pioneer Ladies. She has been actively involved with the Historical Society for 12 years, serving as a Board member and Docent Leader, recruiting and training docents. She writes presentations, speaks with groups, helps with fund raisers, leads Walking Tours of the Arroyo Grande Village, and enjoys researching the historical background of the local area. And she belongs to our AAUW Branch!

Linda's background may provide some insight to her interests. She was born into an Irish Catholic family of 7 children. She has a twin sister and stands third in line in birth order. Twins were not expected so Linda was a surprise to her parents! Her parents were college graduates and she was raised in a "nice home with nice parents", encouraging the children to attend college.

Linda's father, Jack, modeled determination over circumstances. He was raised in an apartment in New York. His father was a chauffeur and his mother was a maid to wealthy families. He was an excellent student and attended the Naval Academy at Annapolis, graduating in 1946 as an engineer. He was called back into the Navy during the Korean War. The family lived in Naval housing in Long Beach, where Linda was born. When Jack took a civilian job in aerospace, they bought their first home in Long Beach and eventually the family moved to Fullerton. Jack had a photographic memory and was known for "getting things done."

Linda's mom was German/Irish from a small town in New York, near Buffalo. She attended Mercyhurst College and became a school teacher. She travelled

west with a girlfriend on an adventure and settled in San Diego, teaching business classes. She dated several officers, but fell in love with Linda's dad, marrying in 1950 in New York with family members present. Establishing their family in Fullerton, Linda's parents nurtured a loving, sweet, big family. All seven children earned college degrees and remain closely connected.

Before attending college, Linda took a "gap" year and moved to a ranch near Redding, broadening her life experiences. She then went on to college in Fullerton, majoring in Sociology. Linda was the switchboard operator at Fullerton College, such fun!! She studied for a Master's Degree in counseling but dropped out of the program due to personal challenges. She began working at a computer manufacturing company in Tustin, eventually became a computer programmer, earning promotions all along the way.

She met her husband, Jeff, a real estate investor, and assisted in helping with the business. Managing rental properties kept them busy in Costa Mesa and Irvine. Linda and Jeff have one son, Matt, who has learning disabilities, which caused Linda to become actively engaged with home schooling and this presented Linda with her biggest challenge. She dedicated time to help Matt complete high school. Linda supported and coached him through English and math courses at community college. He finished his degree from Hancock College with a double major of electronics and mechatronics.

Matt continues to live at home, helping with the household chores, and, as Linda states, "is easy to be around."

Jeff and Linda moved to Arroyo Grande 21 years ago when their son was 10 years old to be closer to family



members, as four of Linda's siblings live in the local area. The family recently moved to a larger home in Arroyo Grande near Huasna, providing room to spread out, cook specialty vegan meals, enjoy gaming with friends and record music for their son, and spend COVID safe time at home. Linda reads a novel a week - mysteries and series authors. She loves the library and genealogy and developed and maintains five family trees. Taking daily walks with her husband adds to Linda's quality of life.

Linda believes in improving her brain, being a lifelong learner, quick on her feet and improving her memory through her work with the Historical Society. Serving as the Docent Leader for the Historical Society for the last 10 years is her greatest achievement. Being proactive in maintaining good health and giving back to the community through volunteer work are both important to Linda.

Advice she shares is that education is important and to reach for high goals. She appreciates that AAUW raises money for scholarships for girls and emphasizes STEM programs. Thank you, Linda, for sharing with us your life story!

~Jean Burns Slater

## Proposed AAUW Bylaws Amendment

Between **April 7th and May 17th**, all AAUW members will have the opportunity to vote on an important bylaws amendment that will **eliminate the degree requirement for membership**. The AAUW Board of Directors and the AAUW Governance Committee give the following rationale for the proposed the amendment:

*"AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls if the organization maintains exclusionary membership requirements. The membership requirement is not fair, is not right, and is not equity. This is simply the right thing to do."*

**Our branch board has held discussions on the amendment.** More will be forthcoming in next month's newsletter. See page 7 for some frequently asked questions. Here is one to start us off.

### **QUESTION: Since college education is more accessible now, why do we need to worry about dropping the requirement?**

- Degrees are not the "badge of honor" they once were, and skyrocketing educational costs, childcare, elder care, transportation, working multiple jobs and language barriers are significant issues for women today that make it hard for women to get a degree. Also remember that as it stands today, many women have gotten their degree only to be burdened by two-thirds of the national college debt. Cost is a barrier many of us didn't have "back then."
- Today, there are more careers open to women- firefighters, police, pilots, entrepreneurs, artists, politicians, manufacturers, retail managers, etc. that don't require a degree. Education can come in many forms, including career technical education, on-the-job training. Women without degrees can certainly be just as passionate about advancing equity for women and girls as women with degrees.

**Bottom line**, If the degree requirement is eliminated, membership in AAUW will be based on support for our mission to advance equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy, not on whether someone individually has had the opportunity, time, or money to attend college.

I hope you will take the time to carefully consider this significant amendment. You can learn more about the proposed bylaws change here:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/open-membership-toolkit/>



## The Waves

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

**Vol. 42, No. 8 – April 2021**

**President:**  
*Susan Brazil*

**Treasurer:** *Linda Lidberg*

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**Program Committee:**  
*Mary Matakovich and Liz Wineman*

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Email Blast & Website  
Priscilla Alquist, Outreach*

**Newsletter Editor:** *Gayle Turner*

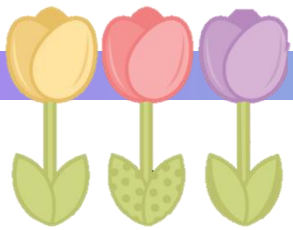
**IBC Representative:** *Linda Lidberg*

**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.





### OPEN MEMBERSHIP FAQ'S

(Sampling of questions from branch members across the US)

#### 1. AAUW has been this way for a long time. Why do we need to change now?

- AAUW has adapted itself to changing times before in order to continue to be relevant.
- Our continued relevance will be enhanced by eliminating barriers that limit who can participate in our mission of advancing equity for women and girls.
- Many corporate and foundation funders have clearly told us they aren't willing or able based on their own criteria to fund organizations they believe have directly or indirectly discriminatory requirements or create barriers to participation in the work of the organization. Corporate and foundation funding is essential for national nonprofits these days. AAUW's membership dues support only a small percentage of our work.
- As part of the country's overall reckoning with systemic racism and inequality, much of which disproportionately affects women, it is time to recognize that our self-imposed barriers to participation are actually harmful, even if these barriers once may have been understood to serve as a well-intentioned incentive to specific achievement.

#### 2. Won't dropping the degree requirement end what is unique about our organization?

- The uniqueness of AAUW is its breadth of programming, research, policy and advocacy, fellowships & grants, and grassroots membership. Unfortunately, AAUW is also unique in its exclusionary membership requirement, which is particularly unfortunate for an organization advocating for equity
- Having a degree does not make someone "like-minded"—We are like-minded in our support for advancing equity for women and girls.
- Having a degree does not make someone a better advocate for women or a better symbol of womanpower. (Think Eleanor Roosevelt, Lilly Ledbetter, Malala, Greta Thunburg)

#### 3. Don't we need to honor the legacy of our founding mothers by retaining the degree requirement?

- It's been 140 years since our founding back in an era when only a very few women were able to go to college or find meaningful employment after graduation. Today, women outpace men in earning degrees at all levels. Women also make up (pre-COVID) close to ½ of the total workforce in the U.S. But economic disparities and discrimination against women persist widely, despite our levels of education and participation in the workforce.
- AAUW can and should take pride in its past and present success in helping women attain higher education. The fully endowed Fellowships and Grants Fund will allow AAUW to be a leader in this area in perpetuity. Education is important and does make a difference. But it alone doesn't guarantee equal treatment or opportunities for women, something our founders cared about deeply. The battle to be fought is not just about education, but about equal treatment.

#### 4. If the degree requirement is dropped, will branch membership increase?

- Membership levels in associations and other organizations are affected by many things. But, certainly our degree requirement is a barrier to joining for many women, and increasingly it is seen as elitist and discriminatory.
- A rush of younger members to join branches is unlikely due to the age of most of our current branch members. However, more women in older age ranges may be interested in joining once the barrier is removed. Fifty plus years ago, many women, particularly non-White women, did not have access to higher education. We all undoubtedly have friends in this category--women who are "just as smart," just as interested in equality for women" not to mention "just as much fun" who



can't be members because of the current degree requirement. Many of us have been embarrassed by encouraging friends to join, only to find out they aren't eligible because they don't have a degree.

- Our degree requirement has shut out women with diverse backgrounds and perspectives – who may inject new energy into the mission. Younger women, in particular, view the fact that we have a barrier to entry that disproportionately affects women of color and women of lower economic status as contrary to our mission.

#### 5. Won't we have to change our name if we drop the degree requirement?

- First of all, we've had a variety of names during our 180-year history.
- Today, AAUW is well-respected and high profile, particularly in its advocacy and research. We would not want to lose this position of recognition. Many other organizations use only initials and didn't formally change their names when one of the original words in the name became out of favor or inappropriate. Think NAACP or YWCA. Changing our name is not the issue to focus on. Opening our membership to a broader group that will work in support of the mission is the issue.
- Also, the full name has not been applicable for a while. "American" – we have worked internationally for over 100 years. "Association" – members dues now only comprise 15-20% of revenues. "University" – in 2005, membership was extended to people with associate degrees. "W" – in 1987, membership was open to men.

## INTEREST GROUPS

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to COVID-19 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 Zoom, or by other social distancing options.

### Great Decisions Meets Again

**What:** Discussion on the Arctic.  
The coldest war: toward a return to the Great Power competition in the Arctic?  
The discussion will be led by Jean Burns Slater, based on the chapter from the Great Decisions, Foreign Policy Association publication.

**Where:** Zoom invite sent to each participant.

**Why:** World topic discussions, recognizing the importance of community conversations of global events and topics.

**When:** **April 26, Monday, 7:00 PM** via Zoom invite.

Zoom in with questions to Priscilla Alquist or Jean Burns Slater.

#### Official AAUW Interest Group Contacts

Great Decisions ..... *Priscilla Alquist*  
..... & *Jean Burns Slater*  
Lunch Bunch ..... *Joan Knowlton*  
Night Readers  
Book Group ..... *TBD*  
Theatre Goers ..... *Judy Zaretska*

#### Independent AAUW Interest Group Contacts

Cooking Group ..... *Lisa Walker*  
Daytime Page Turners  
..... *Jean Burns Slater*  
Quilters ..... *Linda Lidberg*

(These groups have become independent of AAUW in order to be inclusive of readers who are no longer members)

## MEMBERSHIP

A reminder from your membership coordinator...

Please send a check for your 2021/2022 AAUW dues of **\$105** to:

Laurie King  
200 S. Dolliver St. - space 437  
Pismo Beach, CA 93449

If you want to chat continue to delay sending and you will get a phone call and the opportunity to have a chat.

That's okay too but it will take more of your time than just sending the check.



Thank you,  
Laurie King



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