



The



NOVEMBER 2021

EQUITY FOR ALL

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

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OUR MISSION:

Advancing gender equity through research, education, and advocacy.

Waves

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Well, here we are near end of the year. Our branch is supported by so many of you. It’s not always the big things we do that count, but the everyday commitment to go on as best we can. I thank all of you for all that you do for our branch.

We’ve heard from a former member’s daughter that her mother wished to donate her books to our branch upon her death. We are planning on doing an inventory of them and previous book sale books and make the list available to members so that they may purchase them.

Also, we will have them at our December get together to purchase singly or in a book bag. This will be a fundraiser for our branch. So please start putting money aside to help support our branch and consider book gifts to share with others.

In addition, beginning next month, we will be putting our meeting minutes in the newsletter to help keep everyone updated on what we are doing. Plan on attending our November Zoom meeting when our California President, Diane Owens, will be sharing with us what is happening in AAUW.

Many thanks to all of you during this season of Thanksgiving. ~ Susan Brazil

"It's one of the greatest gifts you give yourself, forgiveness." Maya Angelou

PLEASE NOTE:

For computer assistance on Zoom meetings, please contact Pam Zirion

NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING
Monday, Nov. 1
@ 6:30 PM / Zoom

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING
Monday, Nov. 15
@ 6:30 PM / Zoom

DECEMBER BOARD MEETING
Monday, Dec. 6
@ 6:30 PM / Zoom

DECEMBER HOLIDAY GATHERING
Monday, Dec. 20
@ 6:30 PM
AG Women’s Club
(Book Sale)

JANUARY BOARD MEETING
Monday, Jan. 3
@ 6:30 PM / Zoom

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING
Monday, Jan. 17
@ 6:30 PM / Zoom

LOOKING AHEAD



NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

LEARN HOW YOUR ORGANIZATION IS WORKING TOWARDS AAUW GOALS



Dianne Owens, AAUW California President, will bring us up-to-date on AAUW goals and developments at our general membership meeting on **November 15 at 6:30 pm.**

Dianne, an AAUW member from Lompoc-VAFB Branch, currently serves as president of California AAUW Board of Directors, 2020-2022. Joining her AAUW branch in the early 70s, she served twice as president, as well as most other offices. She has also served on the AAUW National Board as Educational Foundation Chair.

Locally, Dianne has been involved at the county level in workforce development projects, committees and training, and is a former Santa Barbara County Supervisor (4th District). A native of South Dakota, Dianne holds a Bachelor of Science from South Dakota State University in Consumer and Family Services.

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING RECAP

Ann Havlik is a past co-president of the San Luis Obispo League of Women Voters (LWV). Ms. Havlik spoke about the organization and its mission:

The origin of the LWV dates back to the Women's Suffrage Movement and its 57-year struggle to gain the right to vote for women.

The mission of the League of Women Voters is to inform voters via non-partisan studies of ballot issues to empower citizens for active governance.

The League is a "three-tiered" organization - i.e., County, State, and National. Each tier focuses on the issues within its tier. Ms. Havlik described the activities of the SLO County League of Women Voters, which has about 160 members.

Ms. Havlik noted a natural connection between AAUW and the League of Women Voters. For Branch members who wish to join the LWV, she suggested going to the following websites:

SLO County.....LWVSLO State.....LWVC / or Facebook.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

The AAUW 5 Cities-Pismo Beach Branch
wishes a very **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**
to the following members:

Wendy Robinson..... 10th
Connie Rogers 21st
Andi Portney 23rd

SCHOLARSHIP

The 2021-2022 Board of Directors for our Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW Scholarship Corporation held their initial meeting on October 21. The first order of work was to reevaluate scholarship requirements based on the impact of the COVID pandemic on the education of our young women. The changes in providing education and the impact on measuring student learning requires the Directors to rethink the past criteria.

As the Scholarship Corporation is a separate entity from the Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW Branch, a review of the Scholarship bylaws and policies will guide the decisions of the Board of Directors. The Scholarship Board is aware of the interest of Branch members to award larger and more scholarships, while safeguarding the Scholarship Endowment funds. The Directors will carefully consider all suggestions that Branch members offer. Please contact a member of the Board of Directors to share your ideas. The Directors look forward to hearing from members. Thank you.

Chief Executive Officer: Jean Burns Slater
Vice President: Erica Hinojosa
Secretary: Pat Muhlethaler
Chief Financial Officer: Maurina Kusell
Other Directors: Kathi Pettersen, Priscilla Alquist,
Beth Hutton, Maureen Kelly,
Joan Knowlton, Patti Melsheimer,
Rose Ann Steiner, Marjorie Ott



INTERBRANCH COUNCIL - IBC

The San Luis Obispo County Interbranch Council (IBC) consists of the five AAUW Branches in San Luis Obispo County: Paso Robles, Atascadero, Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo, and Five Cities-Pismo Beach.

This organization has provided opportunities for the five branches to share their activities, request support when needed, and in the past offered luncheons that featured AAUW Fellows or other speakers. They also organized the annual Ice Cream Social for Tech Trekkers each summer. Fundraising in the form of Theater nights, etc., were held jointly to raise funds in addition to the \$40 per year dues each branch paid.

This year, a concern was raised by the State AAUW CFO regarding the tax status of IBCs around the state. Traditionally, IBCs were not considered affiliates of the National AAUW organization and so were not included in the non-profit tax status of the parent organization. Because some IBCs maintained significant bank accounts, raised funds for various projects, and required dues from member branches, the

issue of tax status and reporting was in question.

After several months of discussion at State, National, and local levels, it was decided that our local branches would be given a choice: disband the IBC as a financial entity but continue to offer support and sharing between branches, or begin the process of establishing a tax status with the IRS and State tax agencies.

The Boards of all five IBC branches in SLO County decided to disband the financial aspects of the IBC. This decision meant that the funds in the IBC checking and savings accounts would be divided equally between the five branches once the accounts were closed and no further Branch dues would be paid to the IBC.

A check for \$192 will be received by each branch once those steps are completed. In the future, any joint IBC activities or projects requiring funds will be equally shared by the individual branches.

~ Linda Lidberg, IBC Representative

WHY NATIONS THAT FAIL WOMEN, FAIL

AFTER AMERICA and its allies toppled the Taliban in 2001, primary-school enrolment of Afghan girls rose from 0% to above 80%. Infant mortality fell by half. Forced marriage was made illegal. Many of those schools were inferior, and many families ignored the law. But no one seriously doubts that Afghan women and girls have made great gains in the past 20 years, or that those gains are now in jeopardy.

The United States is “committed to advancing gender equality” through its foreign policy, according to the State Department. Bequeathing billions of dollars-worth of arms and a medium-size country to a group of violent misogynists is an odd way to show it. Of course, foreign policy involves difficult trade-offs. But there is growing evidence that Hillary Clinton was on to something when she said, a decade ago, that “The subjugation of women is...a threat to the common security of our world.” Societies that oppress women are far more likely to be violent and unstable. There are several possible reasons for this.

In many places girls are selectively aborted or fatally neglected. This has led to skewed sex ratios, which mean millions of young men are doomed to remain single. Frustrated young men are more likely to commit violent crimes

or join rebel groups. Recruiters for Boko Haram and Islamic State know this, and promise them “wives” as the spoils of war. Polygamy also creates a surplus of single young men. Multiple wives for men at the top means brooding bachelorhood for those at the bottom.

All conflicts have complex causes. But it may be no coincidence that Kashmir has one of the most unbalanced sex ratios in India, or that all of the 20 most turbulent countries on the Fragile States index compiled by the Fund for Peace in Washington practice polygamy. In Guinea, where a coup took place on September 5th, 42% of married women aged 15-49 are in polygamous unions. China’s police state keeps a lid on its many surplus men, but its neighbors sometimes wonder whether their aggression may someday seek an outlet.

Outside rich democracies, the male kinship group is still the basic unit of many societies. Such groups emerged largely for self -defense: male cousins would unite to repel outsiders. Today, they mostly cause trouble. Tit-for-tat clan feuds spatter blood across the Middle East and the Sahel. Tribes compete to control the state, often violently, so they can divvy up jobs and boosting support for jihadists who promise to govern more justly and loot among their kin.

(continued on page 5)

The Waves

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

Vol. 43, No.3 – November 2021

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Susan Brazil

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Mary Matakovich & Liz Wineman

Communication / Publicity:
Linda Lidberg, Website
Priscilla Alquist, Outreach

Newsletter Editor: *Gayle Turner*

IBC Representative: *Linda Lidberg*

Newsletter deadline is the 20th of the month. Photos are welcome.

AAUW 5 Cities Website:
<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.

Those states become corrupt and dysfunctional, alienating citizens

Societies based on male bonding tend to subjugate women. Fathers choose whom their daughters will marry. Often there is a bride price—the groom’s family pay what are sometimes hefty sums to the bride’s family. This gives fathers an incentive to make their daughters marry early. It is not a small problem. Dowries or bride prices are common in half the world’s countries. A fifth of the world’s young women were married before the age of 18; a twentieth before 15. Child brides are more likely to drop out of school, less able to stand up to abusive husbands and less likely to raise healthy, well-educated children.

Researchers at Texas A&M and Brigham Young universities compiled a global index of pre-modern attitudes to women, including sexist family laws, unequal property rights, early marriage for girls, patrilocal marriage, polygamy, bride prices, son preference, violence against women and legal indulgence of it (for example, can a rapist escape punishment by marrying his victim?). It turned out to be highly correlated with violent instability in a country.

Various lessons can be drawn from this. In addition to their usual analytical tools, policymakers should study geopolitics through

the prism of sex. That index of sexist customs, had it existed 20 years ago, would have warned them how hard nation-building would be in Afghanistan and Iraq. Today, it suggests that stability cannot be taken for granted in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan or even India.

Peace talks should include women. Between 1992 and 2019, only 13% of negotiators and 6% of signatories of peace deals were female. Yet peace tends to last longer when women are at the table. This may be because they are more ready to compromise; or perhaps because a room without women implies the manipulating of a situation to one's advantage between the men with guns without input from non-combatants. Liberia got this right and ended a ghastly civil war; Afghanistan’s new rulers have not.

More broadly, governments should mean it when they say they want to liberate half of humanity. Educate girls, many of whom have quit school to work or marry since covid-19 impoverished their families. Enforce bans on child marriage and on female genital mutilation, hard though that is in remote villages. Do not recognize polygamy. Equalize inheritance rights. Teach boys not to hit women. Introduce public pensions, which undermine the tradition whereby couples are expected to live with the

man’s parents, because the elderly have no other means of support.

Most of these are tasks for national governments, but outsiders have some influence. Since Western donors started harping on about girls’ education, more girls have gone to school (primary enrolment has risen from 64% in 1970 to nearly 90% today). Campaigners against early marriage have prompted more than 50 countries to raise the minimum age since 2000. Boys need to learn about non-violence from local mentors, but ideas about how to design such programs are shared through a global network of charities and think-tanks. Donors such as USAID and the World Bank have done a fair job of promoting property rights for women, even if their Afghan efforts are about to go up in smoke.

Foreign policy should not be naive. Countries have vital interests, and need to deter foes. Geopolitics should not be viewed solely through a feminist lens, any more than it should be viewed solely in terms of economics or nuclear non-proliferation. But policymakers who fail to consider the interests of half the population cannot hope to understand the world. ■

Sept. 11th, 2021 - *The Economist* This article appeared in the Leaders section of the print of NewsWhere edition under the headline “**Why nations that fail women fail**”

SPOTLIGHT ON PAT MUHLETHALER... Secretary and Record Keeper Extraordinaire!

Born in San Fernando Valley into a working poor family with a dad in cement masonry and a mom who worked as a bookkeeper at F.W. Woolworths, **Pat Muhlethaler** started with humble beginnings. The experience of the economic depression taught the family to take great care, giving Pat a solid foundation of feeling blessed in her life. Her dad had immigrated as a boy from England to the state of Washington with his widowed mother. Settling in eastern Washington, Pat's father worked as a farm hand after finishing 9th grade. He was a widower with a 5-year-old daughter when he met and married Pat's mom.

When Pat's dad was out of work, the family moved to the small town of San Fernando. California provided a place to live and jobs for Pat's family. Pat graduated from high school, planning to be a teacher and decided to attend Santa Barbara College, where she met Ray and married her sophomore year. After Ray finished his student teaching, he left to finish his ROTC commitment. Pat dropped out of college and lived with her sister in Los Angeles, working at ARCO headquarters until Ray returned.

They began their family, and when their youngest child entered school, Pat returned to college at Cal State Northridge, where after six years she received a diploma and her teaching credential. Her first "long term" substitute teaching position began at Franklin Avenue Elementary in Hollywood with 5th and 6th graders. She was reassigned to Menlo Avenue Elementary in downtown Los Angeles. Her husband was a wood shop



teacher for 30 years in North Hollywood at Madison Junior High.

One of Pat's greatest accomplishments was the establishment of a school library. She obtained a grant and ordered new books, new tables, chairs and new carpeting to set up a functioning library where all students were welcomed. She organized book fairs, provided multicultural resources for teachers and loved her job. In the late 80s, she was reassigned as a resource teacher. The commute - being far from her new home in Valencia - encouraged her to retire with her husband in 1991.

They moved to San Luis Obispo, buying property on the mesa - a "ranch" of 2 acres with space for a wood shop and hobbies -

and built their home. Pat joined AAUW in 1992 when her daughter, Dawn, was President. Once Ray was unable to maintain the ranch due to a health issue, they sold it and Pat moved into her current home, where she has lived for 16 years.

Pat is very proud of her three children and their families. Her son recently retired, lives in Nevada. One daughter from Mississippi, her husband and their dog are living with Pat now while they reassess their future plans. Dawn has remained in SLO area since college. When Pat speaks about her interests she lights up, explaining how she loves being with and learning about people. She is a recreational reader, enjoys history, good friends and is committed to AAUW. Her greatest challenge was caring for her husband before he passed away. She has good health and good family role models with excellent character and strong work ethics. One trip to Switzerland with her husband and his parents is her world travel experience.

Pat's family background recently brought her a surprise. Pat sent a family quilt made by/for her grandmother to the President of the Pine City WA Historical Society in Eastern Washington. The displayed quilt worked its way back to Pat's Washington relatives and a reunion was set up for Pat, allowing her to meet family members who were previously unknown. This has been a great joy for Pat, a reunion wrapped up in a family heirloom quilt. Pat's wisdom is summed up as "belong to something greater than yourself..." and Pat belongs to us as part of the AAUW Five Cities Pismo Beach Branch - our Secretary and Record Keeper. ~ Jean Burns Slater

GREAT DECISIONS RETIRES FOR THE 2021 YEAR

Our spirited and committed Great Deciders retired the 2021 year in October. The discussion topic was **The End of Globalization**.

Great Decisions revolves around topics selected by the U.S. Foreign Policy Association. Each topic is carefully researched and presented in a discussion book, and a related topic video is included. After independent reading and general group viewing of the video, one of our members serves as a discussion leader. Everyone has the opportunity to participate. Topics are timely, current, and global, providing our members an opportunity to become more informed citizens.

You are welcome to join this very informative group and be part of the discussion and future solutions. Direct questions to Priscilla Alquist or Jean Burns Slater.

If you would like to join the 2022 Great Decisions group, contact Priscilla Alquist now as books are about to be ordered for the 2022 year.

OTHER GROUPS

AAUW NIGHT READERS Nov. 9 6:30 PM @ Joan Knowlton's
Discussion: **Fifty Words for Rain**

FINESSING FEMMES BRIDGE Nov. 17 12:30 PM @ Mary Lou Allison's

Official AAUW Interest Group Contacts:

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

Independent AAUW Interest Group Contacts:

Cooking Group..... *Anna Zucker*
Page Turners Book Group *Jean B. Slater*
Finessing Femmes.....*Rose Ann Steiner*
Quilters.....*Linda Lidberg*
(These groups have become independent of AAUW in order to be inclusive of readers who are no longer members.)



FUNDRAISING

The good news is that we don't need to do much fundraising this year, as we have adequate funds to enable our branch to provide for next year's projects.

In 2022, we need to decide what fundraising functions we would like to do. Within the next few weeks, I will be sending out a questionnaire to all members. I would like your feedback as to what direction you think our fundraising should take.

Be honest, be candid. Do you know of other fundraisers that have been exciting and that you think we could do? It will take ALL of us to work together to provide funds for 2022-2023.

Keep a lookout for the questionnaire and after you fill it out, please return it to Pam Zirion. Thank you!!

~ Pam Zirion / Kathy Cohon

HOLIDAY PARTY BOOK SALE

Many of you remember Branch member Mary Jo Aspinall, who passed away three years ago. Her daughter, Robin, contacted the Branch to offer some of Mary Jo's books to us to use as a Branch fundraiser. By early December we will receive the books, and the fundraiser will take place at the December holiday party at the Women's Club.

This is an opportunity to make a donation to the Branch, with the bonus of receiving some of Mary Jo's interesting books! Mary Jo's generous hosting and sharing in the discussions for Great Decisions, her enthusiasm for our book sales, and her many other contributions to the vitality of our Five Cities Branch are sorely missed. We can honor her contributions and the generosity of her family by participating in this fundraiser.

Join us for this event on **December 20 at 6:30 PM** at the AG Women's Center.

~ Kathi Pettersen

TECH TREK

The future of Tech Trek camps are still in limbo due to the Covid pandemic. Discussions with Universities that have traditionally hosted the camps are underway but the status of individual camps is unknown at this time.

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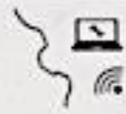


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AAUW Board Meeting
October 4, 2021

*There's always
SOMETHING
TO BE
thankful
FOR*