

January 2024- Volume 45 - Number 5

editor: jbslater2006@gmail.com

Jean Burns Slater

President's Message

The New Year of 2024 provides us an opportunity to reflect on our actions for **social justice**. What is social justice? Social justice is justice in relation to a fair balance in the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society where individuals' rights are recognized and protected. The five main principles of social justice include access to resources, equity, participation, diversity, and human rights.

We hear a lot about DEI or **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**. What do these terms mean? **"Diversity** — A complex and robust variety of people from various racial, ethnic, cultural backgrounds, ancestry, lifestyles, experiences, interests, social economic status, abilities, gender, sexual orientation, and expression. **Equity** — Inclusive access to resources, opportunities and to experiences; the intentional and systemic actions taken to address historical and predictable differential outcomes.

Inclusion — The conscious action and practice to ensure equal access to resources, opportunities, and participation for those who might otherwise be excluded. " Sacramento State Antiracism & Inclusive Campus Action Plan (2021):

Aren't these the concepts we are supporting through our AAUW work? Please look over AAUW National and State Public Policy priorities, pages 9-12 in this newsletter, and think about what we do in relation to these priorities. It is a new year offering an opportunity to evaluate our priorities.

January Events

- 2 6:30 pm Tuesday Board Meeting: Zoom
- 4 11:30 am Lunch Bunch
- 5 11:30 am Daytime Page Turners: Carole Dempsey's home
- 9 6:30 pm Night Readers: Joan Knowlton's home
- 17 12:30 pm Finessing Femmes Bridge: Mary Lou Allison's home
- 20 Newsletter Deadline
- 22 12:30 Let's Talk About Travel: Greenhouse Coffee, A. G.

No General Meeting in January

February Events Preview

- 1 11:30 am Lunch Bunch
- 2 11:30 am Daytime Page Turners
- 5 6:30 pm Board Meeting Zoom
- 24 10 am: Nipomo Library General Meeting

No General Meeting for January <u>February General Meeting</u> <u>February 24, Saturday</u> Nipomo Library Community Room 10-12 Topic: League of Women Voters'

Voter Services

January Birthdays

Jean Burns Slater Liz Wineman Marjorie Ott Mary Matakovich Joan Knowlton

Upcoming January Board Meeting

The January Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 2 at 6:30 PM, via Zoom. If you or your committee have an action item to place on the agenda for this meeting, please forward it to Jean Burns Slater, <u>jbslater2006@gmail.com by December 30</u> for it to be considered at the meeting. Thank you!

Holiday Celebration: General Meeting December 16

The December holiday celebration was held at Priscilla and Jim Alquist's home with a full program. Potluck style snacks from appetizers to desserts were shared, along with hot spiced cider, wine, water, coffee, tea and more. At 3:30 pm a small group of the Nipomo Theater Company from New Tech High in Nipomo, Lucia Mar Unified School District, directed by Candance Mitchell, performed several solo songs, a Holiday medley, and a sing along. The outdoor patio setting was spectacular, highlighting the talented performers. After an introduction of new members, a special recognition honored life AAUW members, Kathi Pettersen, Patti Melsheimer and Rose Ann Steiner, followed by a short bio of each member's work in AAUW. An opportunity to sample more treats, the white elephant gift exchange, followed by the announcement of the most festive attire concluded the formal program. There were approximately 25 attendees. A festive time was held by all. Thank you, Priscilla and Jim Alquist, for hosting.





Tech Trek

Tech Trek has launched! The science and math teachers at the Lucia Mar middle schools received information and nomination forms for this coming summer's Tech Trek camps. They each have until January 26th to nominate one deserving young lady for this opportunity. Once the nomination deadline is reached, the nominees will be asked to go online to complete their application process. Interviews will be held in March and the girls selected will be presented at our April branch meeting.

On Monday, December 18th I was informed that the camps usually held at UCSB will be on hiatus for the 2024 season. The decision was made to address concerns that have been raised regarding the camp experience. These concerns were brought to light via unsolicited reports from participants as well as from a formal survey of campers and staff. The letter I received said it was not appropriate to share the exact nature of the reports nor from whom they were received. As a Branch Coordinator, I do not have any further information than what was in the letter. Needless to say, this is incredibly disappointing.

Nominees from our branch will have the opportunity to attend a different in-person camp. I have contacted the three teachers that have already made their nominations, as well as those teachers that have not yet decided on a candidate for this year's camp and let them know about the change. I have asked them to inform their nominees and candidates that this change in camp location could mean additional travel time and distance. Depending on where camp space occurs, the cost to our branch may also be impacted as camp cost varies with location. Hopefully, any problems or issues will be resolved by next year so that we can once again send our Tech Trekkers to UCSB.

Linda Lidberg Branch Tech Trek Coordinator

Special Request: Would you enjoy working with young girls as they plan for attending science camp this summer? Linda Lidberg will be finishing up her Tech Trek leadership this year. Our Branch is requesting a Branch member or two to work side by side with Linda this year and take over the responsibility for leading the program in 2024-2025. This program is immensely valuable and we do need a member/s to work with Linda and keep this program viable. Thank you. Please call Linda to volunteer or with your suggestions for leadership.

Night Readers Book Group

Night Readers select their books for the coming year and here they are!



Daytime Page Turners

Daytime Page Turners busy with books.



Eager Readers

Elementary schools from the Lucia Mar Unified School District will be selected for our Eager Reader book distribution in grades 2, 4, and 6 during the month of January with the goal of distributing books in February. The books have been ordered with expected arrival in January. Please contact Beth Hutton, Eager Reader Branch Project chairperson, to help with the book organization and distribution. Thank you Branch members for raising funds for our Eager Readers. <u>Please contact Beth Hutton if you would like to be part of the book distribution this spring.</u> It is a truly delightful experience



What is Gov Trek?

This virtual program for high school junior and senior girls is designed to elevate the next generation to pursue careers in public service and elected office. Over seven two-hour sessions, students will engage in interactive and inspiring activities with exposure to women legislators, career options, and the inner workings of a political campaign. The program will culminate in a group competition to create a realistic campaign simulation.

Purpose Gov Trek is designed to address the paucity of women in the halls of power and help young women consider careers in public service and elected office. One of the priorities of AAUW's core mission is to inform and empower girls in an effort to close the gender gap in traditionally male-dominated fields.

Cost The program is free for students to attend.

Program Format Gov Trek is conducted online in seven two-hour Saturday sessions, each with a different focus related to careers in politics, public service and the inner workings of a political campaign. Students learn from speakers and panelists, including current and former legislators, staffers, and consultants, and then work in groups with an adult facilitator to complete activities such as writing speeches or designing political messages. The final project to create a campaign simulation is a team competition judged by VIP industry judges with awards in several categories.

Gov Trek is designed, delivered, and administered by AAUW California. Student recruitment is managed by the 100+ local AAUW branches across California

Gov Trek Info Session for Junior and Senior High School Girls

Learn more about Gov Trek, the benefits, requirements and differentiating factors that make this free leadership education program, the one to attend. JANUARY 8, 2024 - 7PM REGISTRATION REQUIRED. Register by going to <u>aauw-ca.org/what-is-gov-trek/</u> Do it now! Become a Leader! Contact Mary Matakovich for more information.

Friendship Outreach Who might be wearing this Holiday Festive Attire? Next page for the answer. Can you identify our festive member?



Membership

Hurray. We have two new members who joined at our Christmas get together. Linda Lidberg will be sending out their information as soon as she receives it. The ladies are Beth Scroggs and Ellen Christensen. Welcome ladies. We are now at 40 members! Please welcome them at our February meeting. Happy Holidays everyone. We are an awesome branch. Peace and Joy during the holiday season.

<u>Ambassador</u>-is this a title you would like to add to your name? Our branch is looking for someone who would like to help our members feel welcome, assist when they have needs, and find answers to any of their questions. The position has no true definition at this time. You could help us on developing ideas to support our branch.

If interested please contact either Jean Slater or Susan Brazil to give the gift of membership support.



How True is This? This is Why We Do What We Do.



Bingo Silent Auction Update

Our Annual Bingo fundraiser was a rousing success. We raised over \$7,000 and had many happy winners with Bingo games, raffle prizes and Silent Auction treasures. The Treasurer's report developed by Treasurer Erica Hinojosa, stated that in 2022 we netted \$7,188 and this year we netted \$7,409.32. Erica is still awaiting all expenses to come in from the event. This is our major fund raiser and many thanks are extended to our members who donated gift cards, solicited donations from businesses or donated items themselves; to all members who donated energies before, during and after the event; to those special people who stepped up to the plate when Pam had surgery; to the AVID high school girls who donated their time on both Friday and Saturday to set up tables and chairs.

We will reach out soon to members to analyze what went well, what needs improvement and what we can eliminate. Again, thank you!! Kathy Cohon and Pam Zirion

Bylaws Review

The mandated bylaws, sent from AAUW National, designates each branch as an affiliate. Mandated bylaws are required to have AAUW Branch Board approval, but general membership approval is not required. The Board approved the mandated bylaws, guided by Parliamentarian Liz Wineman. Next year we will review Branch Policy and Procedures. Our revised bylaws will be posted on our website after the December Board meeting.

Great Decisions: Prepare to Discuss the World

Our next meeting of Great Decisions will be held on <u>January 22 at 7:00 pm</u>. Books will be disturbed and the DVD has been ordered for 2024. At the January 22 meeting members will determine the discussion leader, location, refreshment host and order of the discussion topics. A quick listing of topics follows: <u>Mideast Realignment; Climate technology and competition; Science across borders, U.S. -China trade</u> rivalry; NATO's future; Understanding Indonesia; High Seas Treaty; Pandemic preparedness.

Consider joining in the world discussions of Great Decisions, recognizing the importance of community conversations of global events and topics. If interested in joining the discussion for 2024, contact Priscilla Questions: palquist@gmail.com, jbslater2006@gmail.com

Lunch Bunch: January 4

For Lunch Bunch on Thursday, January. 4th at 11:30 AM, let us take a vicarious trip to Peru by way of San Luis Obispo and experience an unparalleled dining experience in no less than the Creamery. Many of you will remember the Creamery on Higuera St. from our past lunches at Bamboo, Bamboo and Mama's Meatballs. We are ready now for the Grand Finale at **Mistura.** Found at 570 Higuera St., you will first be struck by the unusual interior design worthy of several camera shots. When you first enter the restaurant to the right will be the dessert selections. Do not stop or look at any of them or you will go no further in the restaurant and will miss our lunch. That you will not want to do.

How does a combination of Ahi Tuna, daikon, avocado, tamarind Leche de Tigre, yams, masago and Crispy rice noodles sound? No? Are you a salad lover? What about Fresh Burrata served over organic tomatoes, avocado, quinoa, roasted beets, kale and balsamic dressing? Still not convinced they have food you will like? Then check out the lunch menu at MisturaRestaurants.com (the "s" at the end of restaurant is not a typo.) You will be amazed. And oh, did I mention the desserts?

Hurry and email Carole Dempsey at <u>medipharmix@aol.com</u> with your RSVP. Try and use the same parking lot as you did for our earlier excursions if Higuera is too crowded. Mistura can be accessed from Higuera directly or if you use the side entrance to the Creamery, walk to the last restaurant on your left and you will arrive in Peru.

December 7: Santa Maria Inn Lunch Bunch



Let's Talk about Travel

The travel group did not meet in December because...... you guessed it! We were traveling, and visiting with family and friends. We will gather again on **Monday, January 22 at 12:30 PM** at Greenhouse Coffee Company, 1064 E. Grand Ave., Arroyo Grande. We invite you to bring past experiences and future travel plans! A thought for the new year, "Once a year go someplace you've never been before". (Even if it's just around the corner). Unknown Travel Guide: Mary Lee Weeks <u>marylee35@aol.com</u>

Scholarship

The Scholarship Directors held their second meeting of the year on November 29 at the home of Marjorie Ott, Chief Executive Officer. Scholarship Directors include: Priscilla Alquist, Joan Florence, Erica Hinojosa, Beth Hutton, Maureen Kelly, Maurina Kusell, Patti Melsheimer, Marjorie Ott, Kathi Pettersen, Jean Burns Slater, Rose Ann Steiner. The current application format was refined with the addition of an email address for student applicants to submit their applications electronically. Applications were distributed to Arroyo Grande High, Nipomo High, New Tech High, Lopez High and Pacific View Academy, all schools within the Lucia Mar Unified School District. The application deadline is March 4. Scholarship Directors thank Branch members and donors for their generous support of the Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW Scholarship Corporation.

Bylaws of the Five Cities Pismo Beach Scholarship Corporation are being reviewed and suggested changes will be presented to Corporation Directors at the February meeting.



AAUW Five Cities Pismo Beach November 2023 Treasurer Report

	23-24	23-24	YTD Vs
Operating Expenses	Budget	YTD	Budget
Meeting Rent (Church,			
2xWomen)	\$486.00	\$393.00	-\$93.00
Membership Directory			
(40)	\$95.70	\$95.70	\$0.00
Program Expenses			
(Zoom)	\$149.90	\$149.90	\$0.00
Hospitality	\$116.20		-\$116.20
Insurance	\$245.00	\$185.00	-\$60.00
Post Office Box Rental	\$176.00	\$176.00	\$0.00
Treasurer's Expenses			
(20 Stamps)	\$13.20		-\$13.20
Newsletter Expenses	\$10.00		-\$10.00
Raffle/Bingo permit			
(exp. Dec)	\$0.00		
Annual State Renewal			
Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$0.00
Membership			
adjustment	\$0.00		
Undistributed			
Unencumbered funds	\$0.00		
EXPENSES	\$1,317.00	\$1024.60	\$292.40

Account Balance 12.4.2023	\$47,819.09
Reserves (Tech Trek, Op. Exp.)	-37,129.59
Monthly reserve draws	
Unencumbered funds	-\$112.10
Monthly expenses	-\$916.62
Remaining operating funds	\$9,660.78

2023-2024 Dues collected to date, 37 members: \$3,701
(\$3,517)
*38 Roster Members -Waiting on payment to process new
member
2023-2024 Dues to State/National:
\$3,036 (1 dual -Branch dues only
Branch portion of dues: \$481
(\$13/member)

23-24 YTD Vs. Operating Income Budgeted YTD Budget 38 Memberships @ \$13 \$455.00 \$494.00 \$39.00 Advertising (11 \$600.00 \$0.00 Sponsors) \$600.00 Unencumbered Funds \$262.00 \$262.00 \$0.00 Operating Income \$1,317.00 \$1,356.00 \$39.00

Fundraising Income as of 12.4.23			
	Gross	Exp./Tax	Net
Fall Bingo and	0.000		
Silent Auction	\$8,037.97	\$628.65	\$7,409.32
Adopt-a-Poll	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sylvesters	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Fundraising			
Income	\$8,037.97	\$628.65	\$7,409.32

Reserve 2023-			
2024	Carry Over	Distribution	Balance
Scholarship (10%)	\$0.00	\$740.93	\$740.93
Tech Trek (32.5%)	\$6,935.54	\$2,408.03	\$9,343.57
Eager			
Reader(22.5%)	\$6,978.51	\$1,677.10	\$8,645.61
AAUW Funds			
(15%)	\$1,486.50	\$1,111.40	\$2,597.90
General Reserve			
(20%)	\$14,319.71	\$1,481.86	\$15,801.58
Total Reserves on			
Hand	\$29,720.27	\$7,409.32	\$37,129.59

Fundraising Distribution 2023-2024 of \$9910.02				
		This amount is added to		
Scholarship (10%)	\$991.00	the Carry over from		
Tech Trek (32.5%)	\$3,220.76	2022-2023		
Eager Reader				
(22.5%)	\$2,229.75			
AAUW Funds				
(15%)	\$1,486.50			
General Reserves				
(20%)	\$1,982.00			
Fundraising Totals	\$9,910.02			

Monthly expenses: Membership, Church Rent, Badges, Taxes, Bingo Last year Auction Net Income \$7,188.02



2023 National Public Policy 2023-25 AAUW Public Policy Priorities

The Public Policy Priorities underscore AAUW's mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. The work of AAUW builds upon responsible public participation, and the following priorities provide a basis for AAUW members' actions at the local, state, national, and international levels. Implicit in each is support for government agencies administering programs, including adequate appropriations, effective and accountable administration, and provision for citizen participation. We advocate public discussion to ensure enlightened decisions on these priorities. We work to increase the number of women, and the diversity of backgrounds they represent, including race, ethnicity, age, income, gender, and sexual identity, in policy- and other decision-making positions. Our positions are shaped by our commitment to being nonpartisan and fact-based, and to acting with integrity. We strive for our work to be inclusive and intersectional, collaborating with diverse allies and coalitions to achieve equity for all.

Basic to all AAUW's public policy efforts is the understanding that true equity requires a balance between the rights of the individual and the needs of the community. AAUW opposes all forms of discrimination and supports constitutional protection for the civil rights of all individuals.

AAUW believes that high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equality. We advocate equitable access to education and climates free of harassment, bullying, and sexual assault. We support academic freedom, civic education, protection from censorship, bias-free education, and responsible funding for all levels of education, including early childhood education and programs for students with disabilities. We advocate for increased and more equitable access to higher education, that is affordable and yields high quality credentials or degrees. We promote intentional, equity-focused efforts to close the persistent learning and opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students from low-income and minority groups.

AAUW promotes the economic, social, and physical well-being of all persons. Essential to that well-being are an economy that provides equitable employment opportunities; reduction of poverty; a living wage; quality, affordable dependent care; paid family and medical leave; safe, livable, and affordable housing; quality, affordable, and accessible health care for all, including reproductive health care; and a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. We support a Social Security system that provides inflation-protected, guaranteed lifetime benefits with a progressive benefit formula, spousal and widow benefits, and disability and survivor benefits. We support robust and strong Medicare and Medicaid systems and oppose any efforts to undermine them, including privatization and block grant proposals. AAUW recognizes that gun violence is a public health and safety crisis.

AAUW believes in the right to privacy and freedom from violence. We firmly believe in the separation of church and state. We support a fair, balanced, and independent judiciary. We support public budgets that balance individual rights and responsibility to the community. We see an urgent need for meaningful

campaign finance reform, open and fair elections that are broadly accessible to all voters, and nonpartisan voter education efforts that will promote equitable political participation and representation in appointed and elected office.

AAUW believes in the need to end white supremacy and address structural and systemic racism. Efforts to improve racial, ethnic, and gender justice must be embedded into every initiative. This includes working to eradicate intersectional bias and creating a culture of involvement, respect, inclusion, and connection, where the richness of diverse ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives is fully appreciated, understood, and utilized.

AAUW believes that global interdependence requires national and international policies against human trafficking and that promote peace, justice, human rights, sustainable development, and mutual security for all people. We support the civil and human rights of all immigrants, including a fair and just path to legal status. We support a strengthened United Nations and its affiliated agencies. We advocate implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from the 4th World Conference on Women and subsequent declarations. We affirm our active participation in the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women and our commitment to ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). We support international family planning programs that are consistent with AAUW policy.

Biennial Action Priorities

National priorities inform state and local action. Biennial priorities for national action are chosen according to the criteria of viability, critical need, strong member support, and potential for distinctive AAUW contribution or leadership. Additional policy priorities are also critical to ensure equity for all. No further order of importance for the additional priorities is implied.

To support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls, AAUW advocates

- Strengthening and vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education
- Adequate and equitable funding for and access to quality public education, including early childhood education, for all students
- Opposition to the use of public funds for nonpublic elementary and secondary education and to charter schools that do not adhere to the same civil rights and accountability standards as required of other public schools
- Increased support for and protection of programs that meet the needs of girls and women in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, including strong promotion of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education and comprehensive sexual health education
- Increased support for and access to affordable higher education for women, including alleviating the debt burden that disproportionately impacts borrowers of color and exacerbates the racial wealth gap

• Support for practices that halt the flow of students from schools to prisons, including reforming school disciplinary practices that disproportionately punish girls and students of color

To achieve economic security for all women, AAUW advocates

- Pay equity and fairness in compensation and benefits
- Equitable access and advancement in employment, free from systemic barriers and biases, including vigorous enforcement of employment discrimination statutes
- Closing the gender and race gaps in leadership opportunities for women of all backgrounds
- Greater availability of and access to a high standard of benefits and policies that promote work-life balance, including quality and affordable dependent care and paid family, medical, and sick leave
- Programs that provide women with education, training, and support for success in the workforce, including nontraditional occupations and women's entrepreneurship
- Strengthening programs, including welfare and career and technical education, to improve postsecondary education access, career development, and earning potential
- Strengthening retirement benefits and programs, including pension improvements and protecting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid from privatization
- Access for all women to the full range of health care services to ensure economic security
- Increasing the number of quality jobs that pay a living wage

To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society, AAUW advocates

- Vigorous enforcement of and full access to civil and constitutional rights, including affirmative action and expanding voting rights
- Complete, accurate and timely collection of data, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender identity to inform policy decisions and the apportionment of political representation
- Self-determination of one's reproductive health decisions
- Universal access to quality, affordable health care, including insurance, and comprehensive family planning services, including expansion of patients' rights
- Freedom from violence and fear of violence, including hate crimes, in homes, schools, workplaces, and communities
- Support for U.N. programs that address human rights and women's and girls' concerns
- Freedom in the definition of self and family, including protection from discrimination and a guarantee of civil rights for all family structures
- Passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment

2023-2025 **Δ Δ Ι Ι**

PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

The AAUW California Public Policy Program establishes policy directives that will guide our members, inform our legislative priorities, serve our mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, and are consistent with our values of achieving fair and equitable opportunities for our diverse society. Toward that end, AAUW California advocates policies that promote, enhance and ensure:

Economic Security for All Women, including:

Equity in the workplace

Enforcement of workplace anti-discrimination statutes

Security in retirement

Access to job training for career development

Work-life balance, including access to quality affordable childcare and paid sick and caregiving leave

Equal Access to Quality Public Education for All Students, including:

Vigorous enforcement of Title IX

Adequate and equitable funding at all educational levels, including pre-school and post-secondary

Removal of barriers for girls to access instruction in STEM fields

Civics instruction in all CA high schools

Access to diverse staff and curriculum that represents historically accurate information

Funding adequate to support a strong infrastructure, and equitable access to resources, including technology

Opposition to the use of public funds for nonpublic and charter schools that do not meet public school civil rights and accountability standards

Social and Racial Justice for All Members of Society, including:

Self-determination in reproductive health

Equal access to quality affordable health care, housing and a healthy environment

Freedom from violence in all its forms and wherever it occurs, including violence against historically marginalized groups, and support for policies that reduce or prevent gun violence.

Guarantee of civil and constitutional rights for all, including all forms of gender identity and expression, and all family structures

Protection and expansion of voting rights

Support for United Nations sustainable development goals which address human rights and women's and girls' concerns

Increased Representation of Women in Leadership Roles, including:

> Proportional appointment to publicly held corporate boards

Access to leadership skills training

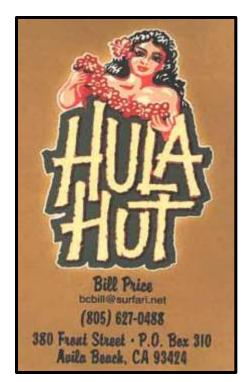
Access to programs that promote participation in public service careers





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