

February 2024- Volume 45 - Number 6

editor: jbslater2006@gmail.com

President's Message Privacy and our AAUW Communications Network Jean Burns Slater

Dear Branch Members,

You may have noticed that we no longer list the day of your birthday in each month's Birthday Wishes in our Branch newsletter. Why you may ask? Cyber security is the response. Hackers are always looking for additional ways to use your personal information and knowing your birth day is one more piece of the puzzle that only makes it easier for them to hack.

Our newsletter is not only for Branch communications. It is a marketing tool, allowing us to set our place at the table of our community for our AAUW Branch. It shares information with other AAUW Branches and inspires others to join in our mission. Our nonprofit status requires us to do good work in the community and our newsletter displays our good work. The Branch communications team has tried very hard for years to not include phone numbers, addresses, etc. on the Internet and in meeting and group notifications unless permission has been given by the host. We are not perfect, but your help in not passing on critical data, photos, or other information that hackers can use, will assist in achieving increased privacy. With that in mind, the newsletter editor has been including photos of group activities. When photos are taken, please let the photographer know if you do not want to be in the photo, as the general purpose of the photo is publication. Thank you for your help in keeping communication open and privacy a bit more secure.

Jean Burns Slater Newsletter Editor Linda Lidberg Web Site Master and Email Blaster.

February Events

1 11:30 am Lunch Bunch

Erica Hinojosa

February Birthdays

- 2 11:30 am Daytime Page Turners: Susan Gray's home
- 5 6:30 pm Tuesday Board Meeting: Zoom
- 13 6:30 pm Night Readers: Maurina Kusell's home
- 17 11:00 am SLO AAUW Black History Presentation: SLO Library
- 19 12:30 Let's Talk About Travel: Greenhouse Coffee, A. G
- 20 Newsletter Deadline
- 21 Scholarship Meeting: Patti Melsheimer's home
- 21 12:30 pm Finessing Femmes Bridge: Mary Lou Allison's home
- 24 General Meeting: 10:00 am Nipomo Library Community Room.

<u>February General Meeting</u> <u>February 24, Saturday 10-12 noon</u> Nipomo Library Community Room Topic: League of Women Voters' Voter Services

See page: 2

March Events Preview

- 1 11:30 am Daytime Page Turners
- 4 6:30 pm Board Meeting Zoom
- 7 11:30 am Lunch Bunch
- 16 10 am General Mtg: Mesa View Club House

Upcoming February Board Meeting

The February Board meeting will be held on Monday, February 5 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</u> by February 1 for it to be considered at the meeting. Thank you!

February General Meeting February 24, Saturday 10 am at the Nipomo Library Community Room

Come join our branch and community members to learn about the League of Women Voters and the services they provide to San Luis Obispo County. Voter Services and voter forums are part of the League's repertoire and League members will be present to tell us about their services and their mission of Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy. This is a vital nonprofit organization that provides voter information, especially in time for the California primary voting on March 5.

The Nipomo Library is located at 918 Tefft Street in Nipomo. There is plenty of parking and we have the community room reserved for our meeting. Invite your friends and neighbors and let's learn together.

Black History Month

San Luis Obispo AAUW Branch Announces a Black History Month presentation in February.

AAUW SLO Branch will be reading and discussing the book *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* by Harriet A. Jacobs. This in-person February 17th branch meeting, to be held at 11 am at SLO County Library Community Room, will feature a presentation about the book with **Dr. Maya Hislop**, Assistant Professor of English at Cal Poly, and author of the forthcoming book, *Bodies in the Middle: Black Women, Sexual Violence, and Justice.*

A Book Read to Commemorate Black History Month in February

"Reader, it is not to awaken sympathy for myself that I am telling you truthfully what I suffered in slavery. I do it to kindle a flame of compassion in your hearts for my sisters who are still in bondage, suffering as I once suffered." --- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl is the first narrative written by an enslaved woman. It tells the story of Linda Brent (pseudonym for Harriet Jacobs). It is written as a letter to White Northern women to urge them to take up the cause of the abolition of slavery.



Tech Trek

At the January 2, 2024 Branch Board meeting I presented the information that I had regarding the cancelling of the Tech Trek camps at UCSB for the summer of 2024. After a thorough discussion about the possible hardship on any campers we would send this year due to the possibility of families needing to make two round trips to either UC Fresno, UC Santa Cruz, or Whittier College, the board voted to suspend sending any campers this year.

There has still been no specific information made available from the State Tech Trek team as to why the camps were placed on hiatus. An appeal by numerous Branch Tech Trek Coordinators for a more thorough understanding of the situation has not produced any clear information. A recent letter did say that 35% of the branches impacted by this camp closure have opted out of sending campers this year.

I have contacted the families of the three girls that had been nominated by their teachers and explained about the closure of the camps. I also informed their teachers and the rest of the teachers that had not yet nominated candidates.

I have decided to continue as Tech Trek Branch Coordinator for one more year (2025) in hopes that we will be able to resume camps at UCSB. I would very much like to have a Co-Coordinator working alongside me next year with a goal of taking over for 2026.

Linda Lidberg Tech Trek Coordinator

Parliamentarian

We did it! Our recently updated Bylaws have been approved and accepted by AAUW National. Thank you to Liz Wineman, our esteemed Parliamentarian, and Susan Brazil who assisted in the review. Our approved Branch Bylaws are posted on our website under Membership, scroll down to Bylaws. Thank you, Liz, for gaining approval from National AAUW of our updated Bylaws, thank you to the Branch Board members and to Linda Lidberg for posting the Bylaws on our website <u>https://fivecitiespismobeach-ca.aauw.net</u> Next year we will review Branch Policy and Procedures.

Eager Readers

Elementary schools from the Lucia Mar Unified School District have been selected for our Eager Reader book distribution in grades 2, 4, and 6. Schools selected for book distribution include Grover Beach Elementary, Dana Elementary and Nipomo Elementary. These are the same schools which received books in 2023. By selecting these same school for 2024, every child will have received a book either in 2023 or 2024 with the exception of the newest first graders. Beth Hutton has ordered our books through Scholastic and our members' generosity in fund raising provided the money to purchase these books for our distribution. The schools are very excited and we already have tentative dates for distribution: Grover Beach, March 1 and Dana, March 21. Nipomo Elementary's date is still to be determined. If you would like to help with this project, which only requires a portion of your selected date, please contact Beth Hutton. Check out photos from 2023.







March Women History General Meeting March 16, Saturday

Topic: Women in History Date: March 16, 10-12 noon Location: Mesa Dunes Clubhouse

Women In History

Join in our contribution to the elementary students of Lucia Mar Unified School District.

Women in history month, March, is approaching, and we will again visit classrooms in Lucia Mar Unified School District to portray famous women in history and tell their stories.

Please join in this activity and become a woman in history. We have scripts for you, and parts of costumes. You learn the script, put together the costume and visit the classrooms in mid to late March, on your schedule. We present for adults at our March branch meeting and at Shell Beach library.

Contact us and join in our portrayals.

Kathy Cohon and Pam Zirion.



2024 Bingo & Silent Auction 2024 Mark Your Calendars Saturday November 16, 2024

2024 Bingo and Silent Auction Date

Hello all you wonderful women,

We have a date on the 2024 calendar at St John's for our AAUW bingo and silent auction fundraiser. The event will be Saturday, November 16, 2024.

This is the week before the Arroyo Grande craft fair at the women's center and a week and a half before Thanksgiving, November 28.

So, yay! It's good timing. You know it's fun and builds our treasury so please put it on your calendar and think about what you want to do to make it all work.

Cheers, Kathy Cohon and Pam Zirion

Friendship Outreach

Good News:

Lisa Walker's daughter Ashlynn is engaged! Lisa is soon to be "empty-nested!"

Jean Slater celebrated a recent birthday by taking a trip to Little Rock, Arkansas. She and her husband Mike explored Hot Springs National Park. Her goal is to visit all of the national parks in the United States!

Nancy Sperling is settling in to her new apartment at The Oaks at Nipomo with her husband, Roger. They are both very happy with the lovely surroundings, fun social activities, and ease of receiving regular support services and care treatments.

Sharon Hassler was a member of AAUW in the 90's for about 10 years. Her husband Caro recently passed away. There may be members who remembers Sharon and may want to reach out and send condolences. Maurina Kusell understands that Sharon's address has not changed if anyone would like to send her a note.

Health Updates:

Judy Zaretzka received the wonderful news following her surgery last fall that her cancer has not spread and that there is no treatment necessary. She reports that this is an answer to prayer and she is thrilled!

Pat Muhlethaler sends her Happy New Years greetings to everyone! She had a wonderful Christmas at her home with her entire family except for one grandson. Her eyesight is quite a problem, but she can still walk the neighborhood and do some large font reading.

Pam Zirion has recovered from her cancer surgery and started her radiation in Santa Barbara. She is doing well and plans to be back riding her bike by mid-February! You go girl!! Members, please give me a call or send me a message so I can share your good news or health concerns with others, if you'd like. Priscilla Alquist

Membership

Hello everyone. By the time you read this we will have had a get together for our new members to welcome them and share information about our branch. We have 9 new members so please introduce yourself at the next meeting and help them feel welcome. They are enthusiastic and want to be included in activities. Thank you to everyone who has spread the word of our branch so that new people hear about us. We are AWESOME. Susan Brazil Membership Chair

Sharon McConnell	History	Santa Maria
Beth Scroggs	Business Management	Nipomo
Ellen Christensen Foster	Interior Design	Nipomo
Jonica Bushman	English, History, Linguistics	Nipomo
Nazaree Jackson		Atascadero
Amanada Sherlock	Applied Psychology	Oceano
Mary Jorstad	Community Service, Gerontology.	Nipomo
Mary Weeks	Criminal Justice	Arroyo Grande
Rebecca Avila	English/Spanish	Arroyo Grande

Great Decisions: Prepare to Discuss the World

Our next meeting of Great Decisions will be held on <u>February 26 at 7:00 pm</u>. Books have been disturbed to program members and a very lively discussion on the Middle East, including Iran, Palestine, Israel, and the Gaza war was held on January 22. Discussion leaders, locations, and refreshment hosts are still being determined. Our topic for February is Global Trade and Green Energy. World discussions in the Great Decisions Program recognizes the importance of community conversations of global events and topics. If interested in joining the discussion for 2024, contact Priscilla. Questions: <u>palquist@gmail.com</u>, <u>ibslater2006@gmail.com</u>

Lunch Bunch: February 1

An early February Lunch Bunch will be on Thursday. February 1st at 11:30.

We are leaving SLO behind for a while and returning to some of our favorite 5 Cities restaurants. We vicariously went to Peru last month; now we are headed to Italy. Which of the several Italian restaurants you wonder? How about **Gina's in Arroyo Grande**? Located in the Village at 138 E. Branch St. (on the right if you are traveling East on Branch), **Gina's** always delivers excellent food in an ambient setting.

If you have not been for a while, why don't you join us for something closer to home with easier parking, including the back. Let Carole Dempsey at <u>medipharmix@aol.com</u> know you are coming.

Let's Talk about Travel

The travel group will meet on **Monday, February 19 at 12:30 PM** at Greenhouse Coffee Company, 1064 E. Grand Ave., Arroyo Grande. Just a few of the plans for the new year include suggestions for day trips around our beautiful Central Coast and techniques we can use to create lasting memories of past travels. Please join us as we celebrate travel in 2024! Travel Guide: Mary Lee Weeks

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow mindedness." Mark Twain

Scholarship

The Scholarship Directors next meeting will be held on **February 21, 6:30 pm** at the home of Patti Melsheimer. 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. 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.

LEARN ABOUT A WOMAN WHO CHANGED THE FACE OF AAUW!

Join us via Zoom on **Sunday, February 24th, at 3 pm to hear about Black activist Mary Church Terrell, her** work for women's suffrage and racial equality, and her role in the integration of AAUW. A co-founder of the NAACP, Terrell became the first Black member of AAUW after winning an anti-discrimination lawsuit. We will hear from Dr. Alison Parker, author of *Unceasing Militant: The Life of Mary Church Terrell*, as she recounts stories and major successes in the life of this extraordinary woman.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to hear firsthand about this little known activist and her unusual history with AAUW. Register <u>HERE</u>.



Dear AAUW California Members,

Please join us for Lobby Days 2024! The event is scheduled for Tuesday, **April 2**, **2024** and Wednesday, **April 3**, **2024** and will be a wonderful opportunity to meet with state legislators and advocate for our priority bills. Meetings will be held via Zoom as well as in person in Sacramento. A training webinar will be held on March 25, 2024 to equip you with everything you need for a successful meeting.

In order to participate, you must complete the sign-up form and attend the mandatory training. Links to the survey and to register for the training session can be found below.

We hope that you will join us in this act of advocacy to promote our legislative priorities and advance our values.

Please complete the sign-up form by **February 15, 2024** so that we can learn your preferences and make plans for a successful, impactful AAUW California Lobby Days. Your voices are needed to bring about the changes AAUW is committed to.

You MUST complete the signup form in order to participate.

Click HERE to sign up for Lobby Days.

A mandatory webinar training session will be held via Zoom on March 25, 2024 (7-9 pm).

Participants will receive training materials prior to the webinar.

You MUST attend the webinar in order to participate.

Please register for the webinar below.

Click HERE to register for the training webinar.

Please contact us at <u>publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org</u> if you have any questions.

Thank you for helping share AAUW's voice on the issues you care about.



AAUW Five Cities Pismo Beach

December 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	\$100.00		-\$100.00
EXPENSES	\$1,317.00	\$1024.60	\$392.40

EXPENSES	\$1,317.00	\$
		_
Account Balance		
12.4.2023	\$47,846.86	
Reserves (Tech Trek,		
Op. Exp.)	-37,029.59	
Monthly reserve		
draws		
Unencumbered funds	-\$212.10	
Monthly expenses	-\$994.42	
Remaining operating funds	\$9,610.78	

2023-2024 Dues collected to date, 37 members: \$3,701
(\$3,517)
*38-40 Roster Members -Waiting on payment to process
new members
2023-2024 Dues to State/National:
\$3,036 (1 dual -Branch dues only
Branch portion of dues: \$520
(\$13member) 40 member

	23-24		YTD Vs.
Operating Income	Budgeted	YTD	Budget
40 Memberships			
@ \$13	\$455.00	\$520.00	\$65.00
Advertising (11			
Sponsors)	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$0.00
Unencumbered			
Funds	\$262.00	\$262.00	-\$100.00
Operating Income	\$1,317.00	\$1,482.00	\$165.00

Fundraising Income as of 12.4.23			
	Gross	Exp./Tax	Net
Fall Bingo and			
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	\$15,701.58
Total Reserves on			
Hand	\$29,720.27	\$7,409.32	\$37,029.59

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, Taxes, Church Rent, Badges, Taxes, Bingo

\$100 Ipomo High Donation from General Reserve Andi Portney \$100 receievd for gratest need in unencumbered funds

School Board Project

By Kathi Harper, chair AAUW California Public Policy School Board Project Committee Kathi was our key note speaker at our October 2023 General Meeting at the Atascadero Library

We, members of the AAUW California Public Policy School Board Project sub-committee, frequently come across materials from groups advocating for book-banning, curriculum censorship, and policies which negatively impact the lives of LGBTQ+ students, in the name of "Parent's Rights." For example, the House of Representatives recently passed H.R. 5, the "Parents Bill of Rights Act." Eight governors have signed legislation with similar titles. H.R. 5 establishes the rights of parents to, among other things: review curriculum; inspect the books and other reading materials in the school library; be advised of policies that permit transgender girls to compete on female athletic teams or use bathrooms or lockers designated for females; and provide consent before a school may use their child's chosen name or pronouns on forms, or change the child's sex-based accommodations. Many of the state laws noted above require the removal of "inappropriate" materials upon the objection of a single person.

AAUW California recognizes that not all our members will find these policies objectionable. And to be sure, most of our members would agree with this statement from PEN America, a human rights and free expression organization: "There is no question that parents deserve a say in shaping their children's educations; that they have a moral and legal responsibility for their children, and the freedom to make fundamental decisions for their families." (Suzanne Nossel, PEN America CEO, Time Sept. 20, 2022.)

However, legitimate questions are raised when one parent's "right" to control what their child reads and learns collides with another parent's right to ensure their child has access to a broad and diverse range of educational materials. Or when a parent's "right" to know if their child confides to a teacher regarding a sexual identity unknown to the parent collides with the student's right to privacy. Or when one parent's "right" to ensure her daughter doesn't play on the same team as a transgender girl collides with that girl's right to partake in all the same activities as other girls, or to feel safe in the campus environment. AAUW California advocates for a diverse curriculum in our schools, as well as the protection of all forms of gender identity and expression.

It is a cause of concern when the rallying cry of "parents' rights" is, as stated by PEN America, "wielded to do far more than give parents their rightful voice; it is turning public schools into political battle grounds, fracturing communities, and diverting time and energy away from teaching and learning." Additionally, according to the National Education Association (NEA), H.R. 5 "ignores the breadth of parental engagement" that already exists, "disregards educator experience and expertise" and "inserts the government into local decisions."

PEN America worries that the current emphasis on working with schools for the betterment of the child has been replaced with a parental focus on wanting to impose their personal beliefs – moral, religious, and/or political – on the entire education system. As an organization founded on the principal of expanding educational opportunities, we might all heed Suzanne Nossel's final words in her Time article: "The phrase 'parents' rights' may have a nice ring to it, but the agenda now afoot in its name should sound alarms for all those who care about the future of public education." Read more at: Pen.org,

Nea.org

Learn more about the School Board project in our local schools in our next newsletter and at our February General Meeting with League of Women Voters.

AAUW California 2023 Fellows and Grant Recipients



Sick of binge-watching crime dramas and dystopian science fiction series? Don't turn to Lassie reruns. Instead, be inspired by watching <u>videos</u> of our very own California AAUW Fund fellows and grant recipients discussing the innovative work our contributions helped sponsor.

ANNUAL CALIFORNIA FELLOWS AND GRANTEES! EVERYONE, EVERYTHING, ALL AT ONCE!

See what your AAUW Fund donations support.

Our 24 California fellows and grantees will each record a 5–8-minute presentation on their study or project. Topics include Women's History, Medical Sociology, Gender, Race and Ethnicity, and others.

We're making it easier for you to see the presenters and choose which one you want to invite to your branch by posting their presentations on our website. In one click you will be able to watch them all whenever and as often as you want.

For 2023-24, these **recordings will replace the typical Fund events that we have had in the past.** Videos are available. They will be available until April 20, 2024.

2023-2025

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



RENEE A. DAVID certified public accountant

129 N. HALCYON ROAD ARROYO GRANDE, CA 93420 (805) 473-9274 FAX 473-9275











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