

## President's Message

Jean Burns Slater

Holidays offer time to reflect on friendships and activities of this past year and the future. We have a lot to be thankful for and a lot of work to accomplish in 2025. There will be numerous challenges for us as advocates for women and girls. We must stay strong, be true to our mission, and act as leaders, advocating constantly within the political arenas that impact our women and girls, as we are united.

## December Events

- 2 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting: Zoom
- 5 12:30 p.m. Lunch Bunch: Gardens of Avila
- 6 12:30 p.m. Daytime Page Turners: Susan Gray's home
- 10 6:30 p.m. Night Readers: Susie Wedell's home
- 14 2:00 p.m. **Holiday Celebration: Linda Lidberg's home (page 7)**
- 16 1:00 p.m. Let's Talk Travel: Jean Burns Slater's home
- 18 12:30 p.m. Finessing Femmes Bridge: Ventana Grill
- 20 Newsletter Deadline

## December Birthdays

Nancy Sparling  
Beth Scroggs

## January Preview

- 2 11:30 a.m. Lunch Bunch
- 3 11:30 a.m. Daytime Page Turners
- 6 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting: Zoom
- 20 Newsletter Deadline
- 25 10:00 a.m. General Meeting: Mesa View Club House

### *Holiday Gathering*

*December 14, Saturday @ 2 p.m.*

*Location: Linda Lidberg's Home*

*Celebrate the season, enjoy delicious holiday food, festive music, and good company.*

*You are welcome to bring a friend or two to this Holiday Branch Social*

*See page 7 for details*



## DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

The December Board meeting will be held on Monday, December 2 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. If you or your committee have an action item to place on the agenda, forward it to Jean Burns Slater, [jbslater2006@gmail.com](mailto:jbslater2006@gmail.com) by November 30 for it to be considered at this meeting.

## NOVEMBER 16, 2024 BINGO & SILENT AUCTION



The Beginning



Tables Full



Tables Fuller



AVID Helpers



Food Service



Event Check In



### SILENT AUCTION: A SUCCESS!

Our Silent Auction last Saturday, the 16<sup>th</sup>, was a huge success. Items were packaged and beautifully displayed. Many people bid on all the items and enjoyed receiving their "gifts." We raised \$3,812 in the Silent Auction! Thanks, and kudos go to those who donated items as well as those who packaged them. Thank you to Pat Muhlethaler for the loan of her garage, and Kathi Pettersen, Kathy Cohon, and Andi Portney for packaging

the baskets. Many thanks also to those who assisted in taking the baskets to the event location, St. John's Lutheran Church on Friday: Priscilla & Jim Alquist, Susan Gray, Jeff Portney, and Jean Slater. Setting up for the event were Susan Gray, Priscilla Alquist, Jean Slater, and the AVID girls. We appreciate all the tablecloths that Kathy Cohon provided.

Mary Jorstad and Marjorie Ott assisted in setting up and Andi Portney put her touches on the displays. Andi also wrote out all the display cards for baskets and the gift cards/certificates. Erica

Hinojosa helped immensely with tabulating the totals along with Maurina Kusell and Jeanne. Cashiers were Susan Brazil, Maurina, and Erica. Retrieving items for all were Patti Melsheimer, Priscilla Alquist, Lucia McCarthy-Zirion, Andi Portney, Margot Zirion, and Liz Wineman. Maureen Kelly distributed the wine to the lucky winners on Sunday.

All-in-all, we saw that it does “Take a Village” to produce and execute our Bingo and Silent Auction. And our “Village” did a fine job! Pam Zirion, Silent Auction chair

## **BINGO**

Our big fundraiser is completed and WE did a bang-up job! Thanks for everything that each of YOU did to make it a success. Thanks to those who sold tickets, gathered Silent Auction items, wrapped, and did the various jobs to make the game run so smoothly. Thanks to those who did the preparation and the presentation to keep players fed, hydrated, and happy all day long. We did a bang-up job!

Did you notice that almost every chair at the tables had a player seated. WE have developed quite a following among the players. Did you see faces that you recognized from previous years? Did you hear lots of laughter (between games only.)? Did you see folks reconnecting with friends and acquaintances? Did you see the serious Bingo players with 9 or 12 cards to play?

You all made it a happy success! Pat yourselves on the back for what you contributed to our AAUW projects. We did well and we did good. Cheers all around!  
Gratefully, Kathy Cohon

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Hello everyone. Please consider inviting a friend to our December social event. It would be a perfect time to meet people and see what activities we provide. Happy and Peaceful Holidays to everyone. Susan Brazil

## **PRECINCT STAFFING**

Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> found some of our members climbing out of bed very early to start the first 4-hour shift at the two adopt-a-poll precincts that we staffed for this 2024 presidential election. By the end of the day, approximately 15 hours later, our 34 working members, spouses, friends, and family volunteers helped voters in Arroyo Grande be part of the democratic process. Despite a few glitches in the process, where we had to check a voter’s ballot status (the call center was swamped), our workers maintained a positive and upbeat attitude. The voters who had to wait for ballot clearance before they could vote a precinct ballot also were cooperative. A change in precinct boundaries had multiple voters arriving in the wrong precinct necessitating an unprecedented number of Provisional Ballots being completed. All in all, we were very busy all day –AND WE BALANCED AT THE END OF THE NIGHT!

We were fortunate to have three Arroyo Grande High School students who worked from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m. to earn Community Service credits. Their experience with the election process will

undoubtedly have a long-term impact on them. In conjunction with a county worker, a set of twins helped voters at the Drive-Up-Drop-Off ballot box fill four Vote-by-Mail ballot boxes. The third student worked side-by-side with our roster clerks and shared her sunny disposition with all who came to vote and work.

Per our usual practice, we celebrated first-time voters with cheers, clapping, and bell ringing. For this election, there were more first-time voters than we have seen in the past which gave us a positive feeling for the future. At one of the Inspector training sessions, an attendee from another adopt-a-poll group shared the bell ringing idea with the County staff and other inspectors and kudos were sent our way.

A great BIG THANK YOU to all who volunteered their time! It is so great to have a fundraiser that also supports our country. Linda Lidberg and Kathy Cohon, Inspectors



## MINNESOTA NICE

Mary Jorstad's ancestors were part of original Jamestown founders in 1619. Family ancestors received land in southern Minnesota for their Civil War service, placing Mary into the "Minnesota Nice" world. Her dad was in the Navy during World War II in California and began writing his sweetheart, Mary's mother, in Minnesota. She took the train out; they married and Mary was born in California. Moving back to Minnesota, toddler Mary landed into the arms of her "Minnesota nice" extended family. Mary and her mom lived on a Minnesota farm with her grandparents, while her dad went to machinist school in Minneapolis.

In the 1950's Mary started school in Minneapolis. By fourth grade, the family had moved to the suburbs. After high school Mary began her two-year dental hygiene program at the University of Minnesota. She met her future husband, Bob, who was student teaching, while she was training to apply fluoride for the public health department on an Indian Reservation near Walker, Minnesota. They started dating, requiring Bob to drive a "wreck of a car" to visit her. They were engaged after Mary's graduation and married just before Christmas in 1968. Bob taught high school science until he received a draft notice for the Viet Nam War. Mary worked in a dental office and began her Bachelor's Degree at Bemidji State University with Bob's family support.

Bob continued his education, once out of the army, and earned a Master's Degree on the GI Bill. Following Bob's career, Mary was quick to be hired as a dental hygienist wherever she landed. Her job experience, when she was first pregnant, was a milestone in setting her personal direction toward women's rights. She was fired in 1974 within a week of notifying her boss of her pregnancy. She was then threatened that if she ever told anyone of authority of her firing, her reputation would be ruined. So, Mary became an activist! She knew she was good at what she did, she checked with her dental association and found that this was a baseless threat. She was hired at another office and worked until the last minute of her pregnancy and was back to work in six weeks and developed leadership skills in the Minnesota Dental Hygienists' Association.

Mary, Bob, and their daughter returned to Bemidji Minnesota, bought a house and Bob began selling insurance. Their son was born in 1976 and Mary focused on caring for their two children. Bob pursued a doctorate in Geology at the University of Idaho with Mary, the breadwinner and dissertation typist. They next moved to Charleston, Illinois establishing their life there for forty years. Mary finished her Bachelors of Science degree in Community Service from Bemidji State University, and started a Master's Degree in Gerontology at Eastern Illinois University (E.I.U) where Bob was a geology professor. Upon graduation from E.I.U., Mary proudly became Dental Hygiene Program Director. After serving as a director for ten years, she returned to teaching and clinic work, retiring in 2010.

With their children grown, she and Bob began to travel. Mary and Bob also continued to help Mary's mother in an assisted living home in Duluth, Minnesota. During COVID, her mother was isolated and passed in 2021. Mary handled her finances, property, and estate remotely from Illinois.

Bob and Mary moved to Nipomo in 2023 to be near their son's family, particularly the 12-year-old twin granddaughters. The move was challenging but worth it. She enjoys the stimulation of family, the outdoors and excellent food. Her philosophy of life includes "Stand Up, Do Your Job Well, Display Confidence and Don't be a Doormat! ".

Mary enjoys quilting, gardening, dance, and travel. She and Bob took ballroom dance lessons for many years and performed on stage and television at Eastern Illinois University, demonstrating dances for other couples. They were photographed for the textbook, *Step in Time: An Introduction to Ballroom Dance*.

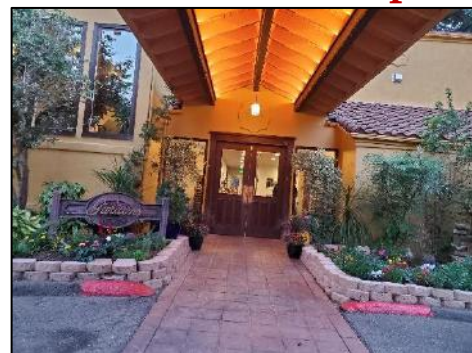
Son, Rob, is a physicist at Allan Hancock College and wife, Juanita, is a counselor. Their daughters attend Mesa Middle School. Mary's daughter, Connie, makes her home in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is a government relations lobbyist for ViiV Health Care, a pharmaceutical manufacturer dedicated exclusively to research and development of products to prevent and treat HIV.

Mary knows from personal experience and antidotal references the struggles women endure. She is a strong advocate for women's rights and with Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW, continues to strive for women's recognition and success. She was born in California with roots in Minnesota, and returned to California with her "Minnesota Nice" attitude. And we are very glad she is here.

## **LUNCH BUNCH, DECEMBER 5, THURSDAY 12:30 p.m.**



**C.J s November 7 Lunch Bunch**



**Gardens of Avila, December 5**

We always like to make the December Holiday Lunch Bunch a special occasion of reunion, friendship, and good cheer. We shall celebrate together at the Gardens of Avila restaurant with

its beautiful flower gardens and Chef's vegetable garden. Word has it that the restaurant, hotel, and spa are beautifully decorated for the holiday. We have reserved a special room called the Garden View.

Many of our members have worked on special projects this year and it is not always easy to get together with members who have different interests. This is a wonderful chance to reunite as a whole group to celebrate lunch and each other. If you have not been able to make it to Lunch Bunch this year, we hope you will consider this opportunity to join us this month. And for all your hard-working members, need I mention that there are hot tubs, a spa, and a gift shop nearby? Come to see what is available and enjoy the fellowship of our AAUW chapter and what locally sourced food the Garden of Avila Restaurant is serving.

Gardens of Avila is located at Sycamore Hot Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Drive. A beautiful drive with easy parking awaits you. Afterward you might want to go to nearby Avila Beach.

To allow more people to attend, we are delaying the time of our gathering to **12:30 this month only**. Kindly RSVP to Carole Dempsey at [medipharmix@aol.com](mailto:medipharmix@aol.com) by Monday, the 2nd of December.

## **FRIENDSHIP OUTREACH**

Happy news this month for two of our members:

Gaye and Ed Peltzman celebrated their 60th Anniversary at the SLO Botanical Garden, where they have volunteered for many years. Friends and family from far and near gathered to celebrate this momentous occasion.

Linda Lidberg is now a great-grandmother! Great granddaughter Ember weighed in at 8 pounds 8 oz. and resides in Grand Junction, Colorado. Linda is busy finishing a cross stitch to commemorate the birth and is anxious to make the journey to hold the new little bundle of joy! Linda will be visiting Colorado in early December.

Remember in this holiday season to reach out to each other, keep in touch, and make sure friends are in good health. Carpooling to luncheons and meetings is always a kind gesture that is much appreciated. Happy Thanksgiving to all and Enjoy the Holidays! Priscilla Alquist    Sunshine

# *AAUW HOLIDAY SOCIAL*

*Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2- 4:30 p.m.*

*Festive Foods and White Elephant Gift Exchange  
Home of Linda Lidberg at 959 Vista Verde Lane, Nipomo*

*Celebrate the season, enjoy delicious holiday food,  
festive music, and good company. You are welcome to  
invite a friend to this AAUW Branch Social.*

*Please bring the assigned food to share:*

*Last names A-H: Desserts*

*Last names I-P: Salads*

*Last names R-Z: Appetizers*

*Hot Mulled Cider, Tea, Coffee, & Tableware provided*

*Bring a Wrapped White Elephant Gift to exchange.  
No need to buy anything... bring something from your  
home that someone else might use.*

*Festive Attire is encouraged.*

*RSVP by Dec 7<sup>th</sup>*

*Text numbers are: Patti (805) 801-7548*

*Pam (805)215-0971 Jean (805) 801-6667*

*Email: [jbslater2006@gmail.com](mailto:jbslater2006@gmail.com)*

*When RSVP ing, indicate if you would like to  
car pool.*

## LET'S TALK TRAVEL

San Diego Zoo November 12



The travel group will celebrate the holidays on Monday, December 16 at a luncheon at Jean Burns Slater's home at 1:00 p.m. In keeping with the travel theme, everyone is asked to bring their favorite international dish. Jean will provide beverages and dessert. RSVP to Jean by text or email. She will provide directions to her home if needed. We hope you will join us for our festivities. Wishing everyone a happy holiday season!



## TECH TREK

At a recent Tech Trek Branch Coordinators' meeting, we were informed that our allotment of girls who will be accepted for camp at UCSB this coming summer will be somewhat dependent on participation by our branch members. Because there will only be one 100 girl camps at UCSB in July rather than the two 80 girl camps, allotment of campers will be impacted by this new decision. There are multiple opportunities to volunteer, some are short term and some are for the entire week. The greatest need is for Dorm Moms. Tech Trek requires a 10:1 ratio of students to dorm moms.

Dorm Moms must be AAUW members. They will live in the dorms and shepherd 9 to 12 girls to and from their dorms, classrooms, dining hall, and other areas on campus for the entire week. They will serve as role models for the girls. They should have experience with adolescent girls. They must undergo a background check with Life Scan. Camp will be from July 13-19, 2025.

There are a few one-day or partial-day jobs also, as follows:

1. **Saturday afternoon (July 12)** before the start of camp - Sorting through supplies and allotting the giveaways we have for the campers and Dorm Monitors place the items in their dorm rooms. Help-make signs for the doors in the dorms.



2. **Sunday afternoon (July 13)** - Help with registration and checking the girls in and to their dorm rooms to meet their Dorm Moms and Counselors.
3. Some volunteers come **during the week (July 14-18)** for a couple of hours to sit in on Core Classes while the Dorm Moms have their morning meetings (about an hour long).
4. **Saturday Morning, (July 19)** - help with checking the girls out (collecting all keys) and getting them to their parents with their luggage.

If any of these opportunities interest you, contact Linda Lidberg.

**We are currently looking for a Tech Trek co-chair to learn the process and help select campers. Please respond to this very important request by contacting Linda Lidberg.**

## **AAUW NAME GIFT HONOREE**

Congratulations to the following members who have been nominated for our 2024 Named Gift Honoree. Their service and commitment to our Branch is recognized by their peers. They are: Kathy Cohon, Pam Zirion, Erica Hinojosa, Linda Lidberg, Mary Matakovich, and Jeannie Burns Slater. Past Honorees have voted to select one of the forementioned nominees for this year. In May 2025, the 2024 Honoree will be announced at our May General Meeting.

## **OCTOBER 26 GENERAL MEETING RECAP**

*"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

The AAUW perspective on Title IX and the recent revisions of this law were presented at our general meeting on October 26 at the Mesa Dunes Clubhouse. Guest speaker Kathi Harper, Past AAUW CA Public Policy Chair, presented the information. If you are interested in the power point slides, click below. The generosity of Branch member Carole Dempsey for arranging for our use of the Mesa View Club House is greatly appreciated. We have been able to use this spectacular venue numerous times.



Title IX 2024 Changes  
(6).pptx

## **SCHOLARSHIP**

Up and running! Applications are being distributed to the local Lucia Mar USD high schools, with a recent change. Now scholarship opportunities are available for students who apply to an accredited four-year college or university or trade school, technical institute, community college or vocational program on a pathway to a four-year graduate degree. The Scholarship Endowment revenue and fund-raising distribution from our Branch fund three scholarships of \$2,000 each. The Scholarship Board depends on donations to provide additional scholarships, which have recently been up to 10 scholarships a year, totaling \$20,000. If you are interested in supporting deserving young women, you may consider an end of the year tax deductible donation.

## OCTOBER TREASURER 2024-2025 REPORT

Unchanged from the published September Report  
Recent fund-raising figures will be reflected in a future report.



## AAUW Public Policy Newsletter Summary November 2024

The primary issues discussed in the November Public Policy Newsletter concern the upcoming election, our California Public Policy Priorities (PPPs), and our legislative score card.

The Upcoming election and reminders the impact on our PPPs

1. Project 2025 – The October 22, 2024 webinar focused on potential negative impacts to the California and National Public Policy Priorities (PPPs) that implementing Project 2025 would have. You can still see it. The link to the Project 2025 Webinar is <https://www.aauw-ca.org/project-2025-and-how-it-would-impact-aauw-public-policy-priorities/>.
2. Election Reminders
  - a. Keep your eye on local school board races; candidates sponsored by Moms4Liberty support policies that are antithetical to AAUW California's values, mission and public policy priorities, we urge you to consider casting your ballot for their opponents. Lucia Mar USD results are currently:  
Don Stewart Incumbant 53.68% Paul Bischoff 46.32%  
Dee Santos Incumbant 53.18% Paul Hively 46.82%  
Mike Fuller 50.46% Vicki Meagher Incumbant 49.54%

Regarding our Public Policy Priorities (PPPs)

1. California: Thank you for completing the November survey on the content of the California PPP's. Your voice is critical for continuing to shape our PPPs!
2. Nationally: December 4, 2024, 4:00-5:00 p.m. PST, Zoom meeting "**AAUW Priorities in Light of the Election Results**" featuring Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy. You can register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEtf-yuqTwrHNXLgJev5-OXXtKlzJSUE1VI#/registration>.

Legislative Scorecard – How Bills AAUW has supported fared

1. **82.6% of AAUW sponsored bills were signed by the governor.**
2. **3 Level A Priority Bills signed into law**

- a. AB 2843 - Authored and sponsored by AAUW California, this bill eliminates cost sharing, including deductibles, from being imposed on any rape survivor seeking medical care following a rape.
  - b. AB 2326 - Sponsored by AAUW California this bill requires Community Colleges and the State Universities, and the University of California, to provide an annual report, publicly and orally presented, of their schools' compliance with Title IX.
  - c. AB 2099 – this bill makes it possible for the District Attorney to pursue felony charges for the posting of information about reproductive health care patients or providers if the posting and subsequent actions result in bodily injury.
3. **2 Level B Priority Bills signed into law**
- a. AB 1790 - requires the CSU system to report on the implementation of recommendations provided in the California State Auditor report, to ensure Title IX compliance and protections against sexual harassment.
  - b. AB 1831 - expands the law prohibiting the possession and distribution of material depicting minors performing sexual activities to include AI and computer-generated images.

**20 Level C Priority Bills Signed into law**

**SEASON GREETINGS TO OUR GENEROUS COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS!**

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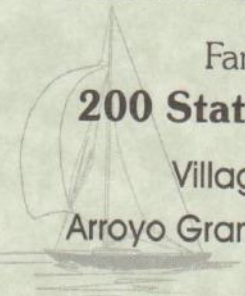
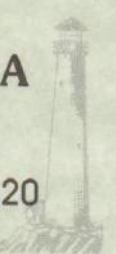


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**HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS**