

President's Message: Celebration Time

Jean Burns Slater

In these confusing and uncertain times, we must set a practice of celebration. Practice: the customary, habitual, or expected procedure or way of doing of something; the actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method. Celebration: the act, process of showing appreciation, gratitude and/or remembrance, notably as a social event (Wiktionary). We cannot fall into an abyss of despair. April is our time to celebrate. We celebrate our Branch officers who have and will guide us in support of our mission. We are tenacious and trailblazing — advocating for women and girls since 1881 and into the future! We honor and celebrate young girls, ready to take the challenge of a summer college experience when they are only 12-13 years old. We celebrate young women, who are ready to step into the college life, often leaving home to follow their dreams. We celebrate our members, who tirelessly provide books, lessons of history through classroom portrayals, read and score countless scholarship applications, and coordinate with middle school teachers and parents to ensure a successful summer science camp. We celebrate members, who reach out to classroom teachers to see what classroom supplies we might provide, who pay attention to our local school boards to ensure a free and appropriate education for all students, and who donate time and resources to fund these activities.

We must celebrate as we move forward. We are not going back!

April Events

- 3 11:30 p.m. Lunch Bunch: Kokku, Pismo Beach
- 4 11:30 p.m. Daytime Page Turners: Mary Weeks' Home
- 7 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting: Zoom
- 8 6:30 p.m. Night Readers: Joan Knowlton's home
- 9 6:30 p.m. Scholarship: Patti Melsheimer's home
- 10 Let's Talk Travel Overnight: San Jose
- 16 12:30 p.m. Finessing Femmes Bridge: Rose Ann Steiner's home
- 20 Newsletter Deadline
- 28 6:30 p.m. Annual Branch Meeting: Arroyo Grande Women's Club

April Birthdays

- Patti Melsheimer
- Mary Jorstadt

May Preview

- 1 11:30 am Lunch Bunch
- 2 11:30 am Daytime Page Turners
- 5 6:30 pm Board Meeting: Zoom
- 17 10:00 a.m. General Meeting Brunch, Officer Installation

Annual Meeting

April 28, Monday 6:30 p.m.

Location: Arroyo Grande Women's Club: 211 Vernon Street

Topic: Annual Meeting, Officers Election, Tech Trek, and Scholarship Recipients

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee presented the following slate of officers for 2025-2026 at the March general meeting: Co-Presidents Susan Gray, Patti Melsheimer, and Mary Weeks; Co-Secretaries Pam Zirion and Jean Burns Slater; Treasurer Mary Jorstadt. This slate will be reviewed by the Board at the April 7 Board meeting. Voting will take place at the April 28 Annual meeting. Thank you all for assisting in filling this experienced slate of officers.

APRIL BOARD MEETING

The April Board meeting will be held Monday, April 7 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 by April 4 for it to be considered at this meeting.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

AAUW National dues are increasing by \$2. The Branch Board will consider how to handle this increase at the next Board meeting on April 7. Please share any input you have with a Board member prior to April 7 so that your suggestions will be part of the discussion.

ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 28, 6:30 p.m.

Arroyo Grande Women's Club

Election of Officers, Tech Trek, and Scholarship Recipients

Voting for the slate of officers for the 2025-2026 year will take place at the April 28 general meeting. The slate includes Co-Presidents Susan Gray, Patti Melsheimer, and Mary Weeks; Co-Secretaries Pam Zirion and Jean Burns Slater; Treasurer Mary Jorstadt. Additional nominations from Branch members are open until April 11 to allow notification to all Branch members 14 days prior to the election. Present any additional nominations to a member of the Nominating Committee for consideration. Installation of officers will occur on May 17, at the general meeting. At this April Annual Meeting we, also, will be presenting:

Students selected to attend this summer's Tech Trek program at University of California at Santa Barbara and their families.

Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW Scholarship recipients and their families.

This is a very meaningful program and illustrates who we are as a committed community partner.

MARCH GENERAL MEETING REPORT

March 15 Topic: Women in History

March was "Women's History Month" and 2025 is the thirty-third year of the Women in History project of Five Cities Pismo Beach AAUW. During the month of March, this project is made available to the students of Lucia Mar Unified School District as an educational enrichment, providing information on women's lives with stories often ignored in history books. This year our March General Meeting welcomed 2025 Julia Morgan portrayed by Pam Zirion, Alice Paul portrayed by Kathy Cohon and Eleanor Roosevelt portrayed by Jean Burns Slater



Eleanor Roosevelt



Julia Morgan



Alice Paul



March Lunch at Sunset Thai

LUNCH BUNCH, APRIL 3 THURSDAY

11:30 a.m.

On Thursday, April 3rd Lunch Bunch will gather at 11:30 a.m. at **Kokku Sushi Restaurant**, 581 Five Cities Drive, Pismo Beach, near California Fresh, in Pismo Outlet Center. The menu includes sushi, udon soup, meat bowls, tempura, ramen, salads, sides, and nigiri sushi. Order and pay at the counter. Kokku is quite spacious, parking is easy and the noise level is low.

Please let Carole Dempsey know if you will be attending at medipharmix@aol.com

FRIENDSHIP OUTREACH

Greetings from your Sunshine Chair!

Spring has sprung on the Central Coast and along with it a spell of warmer weather. Both Priscilla Alquist and Beth Hutton have amaryllis blooming early, way ahead of their normal May schedule! Priscilla's cymbidium orchids are also beginning to bloom. Beth and husband are building a greenhouse in their retirement, where they plan to grow enough vegetables to donate to the Food Bank!

Laurie King enjoys walking her dog in the park, rain, or shine, and knows safe walking tips. Kathi Pettersen, Gaye Peltzman, Patti Melsheimer and Priscilla schedule dates to walk with each other to stay in touch and get our steps in each day. Any more helpful hints for getting in exercise?

Gaye and Mary Jorstad each went to Hawaii separately last month and reported good weather and seeing whales. Jean Slater recently celebrated her 25th wedding anniversary with her husband, Michael, by visiting White Sands National Park near Las Cruces New Mexico.

Jennifer Leland moved to Santa Rosa and will be greatly missed!

Kathi Pettersen hosted lots of company recently. Everyone loves visiting on the Central Coast. Olivia Larson spent time visiting family in Northern and Southern California. She is now back, enjoying pickleball.

Patti Melsheimer has a special birthday coming up early in April.

Nancy Sperling has not been able to attend meetings but she stays busy and is enjoying living at The Oaks in Nipomo with husband, Roger. Give her a call and chat to catch up on her "leisure" living.

Susan Brazil is enjoying her leisure living in SLO as well, but there are changes afoot by the owners of her residence.

In an unexpected turn of events, Karen Thomas took Linda Lidberg to a doctor's appointment for back pain. It was much more than that, as back pain can be a symptom of heart issues and Linda had two stents surgically placed and spent a few days at Marian Hospital. She continues to recover well at home and appreciates everyone's expressions of concern and best wishes for a speedy recovery. Her wrist continues to heal from her previous fall, but she is limited to lifting no more than 1#. Luckily, she was well stocked with frozen entrees and is enjoying her kitty now that she is back home!

Before I sign off, remember that the flu is still out there, stay on your feet, take precautions, and keep healthy! Reach out to others and stay in touch!! Priscilla Alquist

LET'S TALK TRAVEL

A spring excursion is planned for April 10-11-and you are welcome to join. If interested, please notify Mary Weeks: marylee35@aol.com for details by April 4 to set up a car pool. People will make their own reservations. The selected hotel for April 10 is Saratoga Oaks Lodge in Saratoga.



TECH TREK

On Sunday, March 16th, Susan Brazil, Pam Zirion, and Mary Matakovich met and interviewed our seven Tech Trek nominees. While they did that, Jean Burns Slater, stepping into my role in my absence, met with each girl's parent. After reading and scoring application essays, going over teachers' recommendations, asking questions during the interviews, and careful deliberations, the interview team selected the following girls for this year's

Tech Trek camp at UCSB:

Nelly Hernandez Lopez Paige Benson Sophia Lopez Katelyn Lager Aria Martinez Grace Faour Annika Hadley was selected as an alternate should a vacancy occur before camp.

I want to thank the Tech Trek team for their time and professionalism in completing their deliberations. I also want to thank Jean Burns Slater who stepped in at the last minute. I left Jean a voice mail on Friday when I knew I was stuck in the hospital and she returned my call while boarding her flight home from her anniversary trip Friday night. As soon as she was home, she called me at the hospital and I was able to go over what her job would be on Sunday. Believe me, my recovery was greatly aided by the stress relief brought by her agreeing to take on this task! Thanks to the best team in the world. Linda Lidberg Branch Tech Trek Coordinator
We are still 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.

SCHOLARSHIP

Thirty-eight applications were received and reviewed for the 2025 scholarship awards. At the March 19, 2025 meeting it was decided to interview 21 applicants. The high number of applicant interviews displays the quality of the applications received. The Scholarship Board gratefully acknowledges the recent donations to the scholarship funds from Mary Matakovich, Gaye Peltzman, Marjorie Ott. The generosity of Branch members and local community donors allows the Scholarship Committee to offer a greater number of scholarships to these deserving young women.



EAGER READERS

During the month of March over 575 elementary students went on a Treasure Hunt to select a book of their choice to read and keep. Students attended Grover Beach, Dana and Nipomo Elementary schools in the Lucia Mar Unified School District. Beth Hutton, Eager Readers Project Chair, ordered books through Scholastic and with our members' generosity in fund raising, was able to purchase these books for distribution, placing books selected by the young readers into their hands and homes. Branch members and friends who helped with the Treasure Hunts included: At Nipomo Elementary: Beth Hutton, Maureen Kelly, Pam Zirion; At Dana Elementary: Maureen Kelly, Jean Burns Slater, Laurie King, Mary Jorstadt and her husband Bob, Beth Hutton, Sarah Bach and son Lewis



AID FOR AVID.

Our Branch has a long-standing relationship, supporting the AVID programs in the Lucia Mar schools. AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. AVID’s mission is to close the opportunity gap by preparing all students for college and career readiness and success in a global society.

Our Board agreed to provide supplies for the day-to-day teaching in the AVID Classrooms as part of a new outreach to Lucia Mar Unified School District schools. The Board has budgeted \$1000 and, using teachers’ requests, we will provide supplies to the senior AVID classes at Arroyo Grande, Nipomo, and Central Coast New Tech high schools. Providing these supplies is another way we can help the teachers and the students in the very important AVID program.

Supplies will include day-to-day items like pencils, binders, college ruled paper, and some program specific items like colored plastic folders, markers, highlighters, and Post-it notes for organizing study notes, whiteboard markers, and mini whiteboards for small group tutoring. These items are often paid for by the classroom teacher.

We have shopping lists from the teachers and it is time to place the orders and distribute the supplies to the schools. If you are interested in helping to shop, order, and organize the supplies please contact Kathy Cohon at khcohon@gmail.com by April 2. Thank you for considering this this newly funded project. Your help is invaluable. Kathy Cohon. (805)234-6934.

SCHOOL BOARD PROJECT

**Help monitor our local School Board.
Lucia Mar USD Board of Trustees Calendar
7:00 p.m. 602 Orchard Street, Arroyo Grande**



- [April 15, 2025](#)
- [June 10, 2025](#)
- [August 19, 2025](#)
- [October 7, 2025](#)
- [December 16, 2025](#)

- [May 6, 2025](#)
- [June 17, 2025](#)
- [September 2, 2025](#)
- [October 21, 2025](#)

- [May 20, 2025](#)
- [August 5, 2025](#)
- [September 16, 2025](#)
- [November 18, 2025](#)



FEBRUARY TREASURER 2024-2025 REPORT

AAUW Five Cities Pismo Beach

Operating Expenses	24-25 Budget	YTD	YTD Vs Budget
Meeting Rent (<i>Church, 2xWomen</i>)	\$393.00	\$393.00	\$ 0.00
Membership Directory	\$140.00	\$126.12	\$13.88
Program Expenses (<i>Zoom</i>)	\$167.58	\$167.58	\$0.00
Hospitality	\$140.00	\$154.32	-\$14.32
Insurance	\$183.00	\$183.00	\$0.00
Post Office Box Rental	\$182.00	\$182.00	\$0.00
Business Expenses (<i>copies, ledger</i>)	\$30.84	\$ 7.19	\$23.65
Raffle/Bingo permit	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$0.00
State Renewal Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$0.00
EXPENSES	\$1,291.42	\$1,268.21	\$23.21

Account Balance 1.1. 2025	\$51,456.26
Reserves (<i>Tech Trek, Op. Exp.</i>)	- \$(40,608.99)
Unencumbered funds	\$0.10
Monthly expenses	
Remaining operating funds	\$10,847.37

Bingo/Auction Sum	In Progress
Tickets Sales	\$3,250.00
Bingo Sheet Sales	769.31
Silent Auction	3,812.00
Donation	567.00
Square Fees	(75.38)

Expenses TBD** (773.63) 10% allow
 Less Tax (206.99)
\$7,342.31 Estimated

****\$300 Church rent in Operating Expenses**
\$51.59 Reimbursement to date: Need additional expenses/receipts

Operating Income	24-25 Budgeted	YTD	YTD Vs. Budget
39 Memberships @ \$13	\$507.00	\$507.00	\$0.00
Advertising (12 Sponsors)	\$550.00	\$650.00	-\$100.00
Unencumbered Funds	\$0.10		\$0.10
Operating Income	\$1,057.10	\$1,157.00	\$99.90

Fundraising Income			
	Gross	Exp./Tax	Net
Bingo/Silent Auction	\$8,398.31	\$-1,056.00	\$7,342.31
Adopt-a-Poll	\$1,210.00		\$605.00
Program Donation	\$300.00		\$300.00
Fundraising income	\$9,908.31	\$-1,056.00	\$8,247.31
Reserve 2024-2025	Carry Over	Distribution	Balance
Scholarship (15%)	\$887.03	\$1,237.10	\$2,124.13
Tech Trek (36%)	\$9,818.39	\$2,969.03	\$12,787.42
Eager Reader (24 %)	\$4,595.43	\$1,979.35	\$6,574.78
AVID Classroom Support (5%)	\$1,000.00	\$412.37	\$1,412.37
AAUW Funds (15%)	\$1,067.05	\$1,237.10	\$2,304.15
Gen. Reserve (5%)	\$14,993.78	\$412.37	\$15,406.14
Total Reserves on Hand	\$32,361.68	\$8,247.31	\$40,608.99

Fundraising Distribution 2024-2025		
Scholarship (15%)	\$1,237.10	*New Allocations for this fiscal year: \$1,000 from General Reserves to AVID; contribution to National AAUW Funds of \$1,750, naming one gift honoree and \$1,000 to Funds to be made.
Tech Trek (36%)	\$2,969.03	
Eager Reader (24%)	\$1,979.35	
AVID Classroom Support (5%)	\$412.37	
AAUW Funds (15%)	\$1,237.10	
General Reserves (5%)	\$412.37	
Fundraising Totals	\$8,247.31	



AAUW-CA Public Policy Newsletter

AAUW Public Policy Newsletter

Summary

March 2025

Lobby Days 2025

Overwhelming interest: 80 people registered to lobby in-person at the Capitol on April 8th, and 105 people registered to lobby virtually via Zoom on April 9th. Teams will be selected and scheduled; three priority bills (TBD) will be selected and talking points provided. Info on bill details and logistics of lobby days will be posted here.

Share Public Policy News

Please share PP News more broadly! We want everyone inside and outside of AAUW, including anyone not regularly involved in Public Policy, to have important action tools and updates.

Webinar – DEI Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

DEI In The Balance - Strategies for Moving Forward In Uncertain Times. If you missed this webinar you can watch it on <https://americananthro.org/event/webinar-dei-in-the-balance>

Implementation Project 2025

Our core values are under attack. Take action. Track Implementation here . We will continue to compile resources to help you take action to fight back.

AAUW California is building out our own action-items database, which is being released to the California Board to review in March, and which will go live for you in April.

Focus this month: Take Action: Sexual Assault Violence Prevention

Educate yourself: Nationwide organizations dealing with sexual assault violence here . Domestic Violence Awareness Project resources here. CDC Resources here.

Outreach to Legislators: Use 5-calls to reach out to federal legislators to oppose the abolition of the Department of Education, which will impact enforcement of existing sexual and gender-based violence.

Text SIGN PNNWWO to 50409 to contact legislators, urging them to back efforts to get money flowing to relevant organizations and programs to raise awareness about and prevent sexual assault violence (e.g. Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women). See NL article, below, for additional agencies.

Focused education: share with a friend, organize an event around this theme.

Sexual Assault Prevention Month - April

Violence awareness began officially when the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) became law in 1984, providing the primary federal funding for domestic violence victims and their children. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), passed by Congress in 1994, is comprehensive federal legislation to end violence against women. In 2001, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center coordinated the first national Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). In 2009, President Barack Obama officially declared April to be Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

By the second week of President Donald Trump's current administration, the Office of Management and Budget, had ordered a freeze of all federal financial assistance in all agencies including those that oversee government programs and funding for organizations that provide domestic violence and sexual assault services. Despite multiple court orders funds have not been received for programs aimed at preventing sexual violence.

Individually, **contact Congress members and state officials** to back efforts to get the money flowing to relevant organizations and programs that raise awareness of and prevent sexual assault violence.

Act in local communities **to improve safety in public spaces** and urge local officials to promote policies that support women and children.

Overall, **support organizations country-wide that deal with Sexual Assault Violence.**

WHY AAUW IS RELEVANT

Have you stopped to review all AAUW accomplishes even in present-day circumstances?

Here are some highlights from first national, then state and local:

- 6.3 million dollars went to 285 AAUW Fellows and Community Organizations
- 6157 women received Work Smart, Money Smart, and Start Smart training
- 500 college women went to National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)
- 47,000 messages were sent to our elected officials via the 2-minute activist

Learn more from the [2024 Annual Report](#).

- Speech Trek – working with high school students to deliver a speech on a selected timely topic
- Tech Trek has sent more than 15,000 girls, entering 8th grade, to STEM camps throughout California since 1998. Virtual camps were added during the pandemic and now both options are offered! Be inspired at their website: [Tech Trek](#).
- Branches provide thousands of local scholarships for women pursuing their first 4-year degree.
- A focus on DEI makes the world a better, more welcoming place.
- Too many local programs to list here; check out [Branch Brag](#) on the AAUW California website

So, keep strong and carry on!

GREETINGS TO OUR GENEROUS COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS!

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