

San Jose Branch

BONFIRE

Empowering Women Since 1881

2014-2015

**AAUW San Jose
Board of Directors**

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Sharon Bouska

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Grace O'Leary (Local
Scholarship); Jean
Boyden (Financially Fit
For Life); Elaine Benoit
(Gifts for Teens); Linda
Rowlett (Neighbors
Helping Neighbors);
Nancy Hooton (Tech
Excellence). Public
Policy - Jacqui
Gustaferro

Tech Excellence: What is it?

Every year 30 girls at John Muir Middle School start the year by learning about the scientific method.

Snail Study: The Scientific Method

Question:
How Strong is a snail?

Hypothesis: The snail is a small animal, so it is probably weak.
Test Hypothesis: Create a sled that a snail can pull. Put some objects on the sled. Observe if the snail can pull the loaded sled.

Conclusion: The girls couldn't believe their eyes! The snails can pull a large amount of weight in contrast to their size and weight. For example, the snail in the photo below is strong enough to pull a sled full of school supplies!



**Question: Can a snail get out of
snail jail without getting hurt?**

Hypothesis: The snail's shell and foot are soft; therefore, it will get hurt.

Test Hypothesis: Put a snail in a nail jail. Observe if the snail gets out unhurt.

Conclusion: Wow, the snail's muscular foot, which is covered with mucous, can climb out of a nail jail without getting hurt!



Become a volunteer with the Tech Excellence Group at John Muir Middle School. To find out more about this community action project, contact Nancy Hooton.



President's Notes

Diane Trombetta

Diane Trombetta, President

Dear Branch Members: I am writing this column "solo" because Geri Madden has resigned her position as co-president. I had been looking forward to a fruitful and enjoyable partnership with her, but I understand and respect her wishes. Our Branch provides tremendous opportunities for participation and leadership. We have an amazing variety of interest groups, community projects and educational programs to choose from, and we can be more active one year, less active the next. I look forward to an active, productive, and rewarding year working alongside the leaders and members of our amazing AAUW San Jose "family."

Our mission has not changed: advancement of equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research. Technology, the economy, and our population demographics, however, are changing rapidly. Twenty-five years from now, will our Branch still exist as the vibrant organization it is today if we

don't address challenges such as recruitment of younger members, mastery of internet communication and social media, leadership succession and long-term financial security? These are some of the concerns that motivated the Board to authorize development of a three-year Branch Strategic Plan. Four major goals and their related objectives were proposed to the Board on June 1 and were approved. These will be printed in the September Bonfire and discussed at Fall Event. You will have several opportunities during the coming year to suggest how our Branch can best implement these goals and objectives...stay tuned!

Meanwhile, be sure to look for the new "Board Matters" column in the *Bonfire*, summarizing the major actions and issues your Board of Directors is working on each month. Did you know that you are welcome to attend Board meetings? If you'd like to discuss an issue, contact me about getting on the agenda. In addition, the minutes of every Board meeting will be posted on the bulletin board at Headquarters. I look forward to chatting with many of you at Fall Event in September, and to a year of dynamic and inspiring work on behalf of women and girls.

Missing: President-Elect

Diane Trombetta

Did you know we are missing a President Elect? The lack of a President Elect for 2014-15 raises a crucial issue for our consideration and discussion: Why is it so difficult to fill Branch leadership positions, especially the President's position? What would it take for YOU to volunteer to take a leadership position in the Branch? Do you have suggestions for making Branch leadership more attractive and doable?

If you have been a Branch leader and/or a member of the Board, please consider the role of President Elect in 2014-15. Call me: We can talk about the position and how to make it a doable, rewarding and valuable experience for you. I hope you will contribute—through written or online surveys we conduct, in future focus groups, through speaking at a Board meeting, or through direct communication to a Branch leader or Board member. Take the first step in our common journey toward the future.

Public Policy



Summertime and the Livin' is Not Easy in Santa Clara County

Jacqui Gustafarro and Gloria Leonard, Co-Chairs, Public Policy Committee

Wage theft is rampant in Santa Clara County. Wage theft is the crime of stealing earned wages from workers when a worker is paid less than minimum wage, is not paid overtime, is paid only in tips, or works off the clock. Data indicate that wage theft is worse in Santa Clara County than in other regions in the state. Our community partners, the Office of Women's Policy and the Santa Clara County Wage Theft Coalition, reached out asking us to support a working group of county departments and constituent organizations to address the issue of wage theft in the county.

Economic justice is a priority principle of AAUW and the Branch Public Policy Committee has represented our organization at the community-wide strategy meetings. Discussions and briefings about what local enforcement mechanisms can do have brought results. In June, the Board of Supervisors approved a plan brought forth by County Counsel to change the language and stipulations for county contracts to make violators ineligible. Currently, the County Counsel is tackling permit suspension and other measures to combat the devastating effects of wage theft on families in Santa Clara County. See the bulletin board at Headquarters for further developments. To learn more about wage theft, go to www.wagetheftcoalition.com.

Headquarters Contacts

The eight-member Building and Properties Committee has assigned responsibilities for the 2014-2015 year. Please be sure to contact Laura Manthey (Keys & Calendar) to reserve space if you plan to meet at Headquarters. Other issues about "our house" can be referred to the appropriate person on the Committee or to one of the Co-Chairs.

Co-Chair and Board Rep:

Janice Robbins

Co-Chair: Linda Guyer

Secretary: Barbara Van Arsdale

Treasurer: Susan Dietz

Supplies: Susan Brundage

Keys and Calendar: Laura Manthey:

Maintenance and Landscaping: Janice Robbins; Pat Brie, Linda Holbrook

In Memoriam

We were saddened to learn that member **Lois Ario** passed away in May. Lois participated in the Wednesday Night Book Group and like most of us was never hesitant to share an opinion. We'll miss her contributions.

Save the Date

Fall Event

Saturday,
September 13

9:30 am to 1 pm

AAUW San Jose Branch Bonfire

Branch Programs and Updates

Profiles of Appointed Officers

Grace O'Leary- Local Scholarship: Grace has belonged to our Branch for about forty years. She has served as AAUW Funds VP and currently as Local Scholarship Chair. She has also served on the Building and Properties Committee and participates in the Financially Fit for Life Community Action Project.

Linda Rowlett- Neighbors Helping Neighbors: Linda joined the Branch in 2007. She participates in the gleaning project for Sacred Heart, dinners at San Jose Supportive Housing, and the Linus project (which she chairs). Linda served on the Nominating Committee this past year and is a member of the Bonfire editorial staff.

Nancy Hooton-Tech Excellence: A retired first grade teacher, Nancy has been a member since 1977. She loves making a difference in the lives of middle school girls through Tech Excellence. She has just finished a two-year term as Branch Treasurer, and enjoys Wednesday Evening Book Discussion, Art Appreciation and other interest groups.

Elaine Benoit-Gifts for Teens: Elaine joined AAUW as a young mom seeking companionship and intellectual involvement. She has served as Branch President, Program and Membership VP, Finance Chair and Treasurer, and on the AAUW CA Public Policy Committee. Elaine also volunteers with Tech Excellence and at Tech Trek science camp.

Jacqui Gustaferro-Public Policy: Jacqui taught for 28 years through the Department of Defense in Germany, Turkey and Japan. She joined AAUW San Jose in 2009, joined the Public Policy Committee and later traveled with AAUW to Cuba. Living in other countries has shown her how much still needs to be done to bring equal rights to women--Jacqui's lifelong passion.

Sharon Bouska-Interest Groups: Sharon joined in 2009 and was involved with Mystery Lovers Book Group, NHN, and Gifts for Teens. In 2010 she became a Membership VP and loved that position. She is serving her second year as Interest Group Coordinator.

Jean Boyden-Financially Fit For Life: Over the previous several years the Financially Fit for Life CAP has developed several successful programs, including \$mart Travel, \$mart Giving and Money Matter\$--money management for high school and college students. The goal for this year is to reach more groups, with the help of additional volunteers.

Tech Excellence/Tech Trek Team Calls for Grant Writers

Edna Robison, Jane Guinther

Do you have experience writing grants? Our technology-based valley has a number of grant opportunities for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) based nonprofit groups, especially for women and girls. Our Tech Excellence and Tech Trek programs fit the bill. We need help navigating the grant writing system to access funds for these programs. If you can help, please contact Nancy Hooton.

Tech Excellence is a twice-monthly hands-on science program for seventh grade girls designed to encourage science careers and bolster self-esteem. AAUW San Jose collaborates with John Muir Middle School (JMMS) in San Jose, where math and science teachers select 30 girls to attend the nine-month program. AAUW SJ members organize the classroom activities, guest speakers, and field trips, and participate in all facets of this science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) experience. Since September 1996, over 500 girls have benefited from Tech Excellence.

Tech Trek is an AAUW CA program-in-a-box, one-week STEM summer camp for eighth grade girls. AAUW California Tech Trek administers the program all over the state and currently runs nine camps in eight different college campuses. AAUW San Jose sponsors girls chosen from middle schools in San Jose to attend Stanford University for this exciting hands-on learning experience. The girls live the life of a college student, interacting with women who model a high degree of science and math in their daily lives. Since 1998, our Branch has sponsored over 50 girls.

AAUW San Jose Branch Bonfire

Branch Programs and Updates

Membership Matters

AAUW San Jose Welcomes New Members

Claire Campodonico

SUZANNE SELBY was referred by Ruth Granfors. Suzie studied at Iowa State University where she earned her BS in mathematics with minors in Physics and Textiles. She worked in the computer science field for twenty-five years, mostly in New Jersey. Suzie started as a programmer and progressed to software designer. She is now retired.

JAN McCANN received her BA in Political Science from California State University, Chico. For the past ten years, Jan has worked at Paychex as the Area Manager of HR Solutions. Before that, she was employed by Adobe Systems in their HR Department overseas in London, England. Jan learned of our Open House on Facebook.

KATHLEEN HANES earned her BA in Social Ecology, with a minor in Spanish, from the University of California, Irvine. She is working on her Education Specialist Teaching Credential from Long Beach State. She is currently a Teaching Assistant in Special Education. Her marriage in 2006 brought her to San Jose. Her husband sings for the San Jose Symphonic Choir. They travel the world with his choir. When home, she also works as an usher for the San Jose Giants. She learned of our Branch through Facebook.

SHERL CHAMBLISS lives in Santa Clara. As a sponsor and member of the Mexican Heritage Plaza, she was inspired to join our Branch while attending the recent AAUW Strong Girls, Strong Women Leadership Conference. Sheryl earned her BA in Professional Studies from the University of Memphis. She also received her Masters in Human Services from Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA. She is the Executive Director of Moving Mountains Center.

DIANE PIEDMONT resides in Cupertino. She learned of our Branch through an article in the San Jose Mercury News. Diane is a graduate of the University of California at Davis. She has a BS in Zoology. Most of her career has been working for pharmaceutical companies. She volunteers at West Valley Community Center and at the Humane Society's kitten nursery. Her favorite pastime is reading.

MARY McLANE earned a BS in Sociology from Santa Clara University and a MA in Social Psychology from Washington State University. Her career has been in non-profit organizations. She is the Executive Director of the San Jose Library Foundation. Prior to that position, she was Executive Director of the American Heart Association, Santa Clara County. She was referred by member Sarah Janigian.

BARBARA McGOWAN studied at Sonoma State University where she received her BA in Anthropology. Continuing her studies, Barbara earned her MA in the same subject from California State University East Bay. She was the Foreign Student Advisor at both CSUEB and Armstrong College. Her career took a shift when she left teaching to work at State Compensation Insurance Fund. She held a variety of management positions there. Now retired, Barbara enjoys spending time with her family, traveling and attending live music events. She was referred by Geri Madden.

Thank you Claire Campodonico for contacting our new members and writing their bios for the BONFIRE.

Members in the News

When the Los Gatos Theater was being renovated this last spring, long time AAUW member **Doris Traber** visited the Project Manager to ask that special equipment be installed to accommodate hearing impaired and deaf patrons. Success! Thanks to Doris' efforts, these accommodations are in place so more people can enjoy the movies.



Past-President (1969-70) **Chris Osborne** celebrating her 90th birthday with Past-Presidents **Sandra Savage, Gail McCoy Innes, Jean Wyatt, Carol Fitting, and June Tablak.** Other Past Presidents at the party included **Mary Ellen Heising, Marion Melendy, Jean Boyden** and **Jean Reed.**

Holiday Teen Gift Bag Drive

Jan Giroux, Gifts for Teens

AAUW San Jose is now collecting donations of fun and practical teenage girl gift items. Gifts for Teens actively provides community support for needy and low-income South Bay teens by creating and distributing holiday gift bags each December. Our goal this year is 1,200 bags, 650 bags going to girls. What teenage girl wouldn't love receiving new items like cosmetics, hair products, knit scarves and hats, cosmetic bags or other fun girl gifts (no travel sizes please). The need is tremendous and donations from generous members like you can help make this goal a reality.

New items can be left at AAUW Headquarters and put into the bin in the parlor closet. Please put your name and address inside the bag of donations.

Contact:

Elaine Benoit (408) 268-9654.



May 2014 AAUW BRIDGE WINNERS

Bobbie Eckerman

First Monday: Margery Epperson, Jackie Chase, Judy Kumagai
Second Monday: Sue Dietz, Rosemary Busch, Barbara Shandera
Second Thursday: Cancelled
Second Friday (Duplicate): Bobbie Eckerman, Pat Mikolic, Ruth White
Third Friday: Mary Fitzgerald, Lida Kluzek
Fourth Tuesday: Bobbie Eckerman, Barbara Shandera

June 2014 AAUW BRIDGE WINNERS

First Monday: Jackie Chase, Jean Benedetti, Sue Dietz
Second Monday: Barbara Shandera, Kennette Shannon, Mary Braley
Second Thursday: Nancy Valby, Patty Baggese
Second Friday (Duplicate): Bobbie Eckerman, Judy Kumagai, Jean Kudlick
Third Friday: Leela Viswanathan, Ruth White
Fourth Tuesday: Sandra Savage, Anna Kurze, Bobbie Eckerman

August Calendar

All meetings are at Headquarters unless otherwise noted.

Weekend Walkers meets most Saturdays and Sundays for an hour-long walk on the Los Gatos Creek Trail. To receive weekly emails about walks, contact Jean Reed.

August 3, Sunday
Weekend Walkers
Much Ado About Nothing
Oak Meadow Park
Tickets at www.fteshakes.org
Jean Reed

August 4, Monday 7 pm
Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Budget & Planning meeting
Bobbie Baker

Dienstag 5 August um 11 Uhr
German Conversation
bei Barbara Snyder.
RSVP an Barbara Snyder

August 8, Friday 10 am
Duplicate Bridge
Lida Kluzek

11 August, Monday, 1:30 pm
Financially Fit for Life
Jean Boyden

August 12, Tuesday 6 pm
Light Gourmet
Cheryl Markman

August 15, Friday 10 am
Bridge
Lida Kluzek

19 August, Mardi à 11 heures
French Conversation
chez Barbara Snyder
RSVP à Barbara Snyder

August 19, Tuesday 6 pm
Public Policy Committee
Jacqui Gustafarro

August 25, Monday 9:30-11:30 am
Buildings and Property Committee
Linda Guyer; Laura Manthey

August 26, Tuesday 11:30 am
Lunch Bunch
Ristorante A. Bellagio
33 S Central Avenue, Campbell
RSVP to Barbara Van Arsdale

August 26, Tuesday 7 pm
Great Decisions PM
Jan Palajac

August 28, Thursday 11:30 am
Women's Equality Day luncheon
Register at <http://owp.scc.org>
Jacqui Gustafarro

August 28, Thursday 6:30
Game Night
RSVP by Monday Aug 25
Sandee Plymire
408-280-5799

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**PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID**

President: Diane Trombetta

Membership: Linda Goldberg, Nanci Eksterowicz, Marty Glanzman, Kathy Myers

Bonfire Staff:

Editor: Jean Reed

Editorial Staff: Sue Covey, Diane Lane, Linda Rowlett

Distribution: Alma Powell

Change of Address: Linda Lloyd

BONFIRE ARTICLE SUBMITTAL RULES:

The sole purpose of this publication is to convey the association's business to its membership. Only articles and announcements related to Branch business will be considered for inclusion.

AAUW San Jose Branch Bonfire



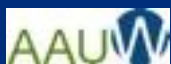
Fall Event

Saturday, September 13
9:30 am to 1 pm

First Congregational Church
(corner of Hamilton and Leigh)

Prospective members, new members, long-time members- there is something for everyone and everyone is welcome. Check out what AAUW has done in the past year and what's coming up this year. Please plan to attend and bring your family and friends.

Contact: [Diane Trombetta](#)



Empowering Women Since 1881

See the San Jose Branch Website at www.aauwsanjose.org for more information.