



# BONFIRE

San Jose Branch

Empowering women since 1881

A huge thank you to Immediate Past President Peg Carlson-Bowen for guiding us through an unprecedented time in history none of us will ever forget. It was challenging, but also showed us what we're capable of accomplishing. It's been 30 years since I was the Roseburg Branch President. Much is the same, such as advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy, but much has changed such as strategic objectives that align with the enormous social, political and organizational changes we've seen in the last two years. I expect to have a lot of fun this year and I hope you do too as we get to know one another.

Thank you to the Board, Committee, and Community Action Project (CAP) chairs and members who are continuing or have taken a leadership role, whether elected or appointed.



**President's Corner**  
**Sonia Wright**

President: Sonia Wright (new)  
 President Elect: This could be you!  
 Immediate Past President: Peg Carlson-Bowen (new)  
 Finance Officer: Pat Diamond (continuing)  
 Treasurer: Julia Howlett (new)  
 Secretary: Alicia Silka (new)  
 Program VP: This could be you!  
 Membership Co-VP: Leticia Cowen (continuing)  
 Membership Co-VP: Sarah Janigian (continuing)  
 Membership Co-VP: Monika Ryser (continuing)  
 Membership Co-VP: Peg Carlson-Bowen (new)  
 AAUW Funds Co-VP: Shirley Karabian (new)  
 AAUW Funds Co-VP: Catherine Kilkenny (new)  
 Building & Properties Chair: Pamela Dougherty (continuing)

Local Scholarship Chair: Ruth Dusan (continuing)  
 College/University Relations Rep:  
     Marty Behler (continuing)  
 Neighbors Helping Neighbors Chair:  
     Mary Jane Vitkovich (new)  
 Tech Trek Chair: Karelle Cornwell (continuing)  
 Public Policy Chair: Susan Karlins (continuing)  
 Interest Group Coordinator: Margaret Bard (new)  
 Parliamentarian: Linda Goldberg (new)  
 Office Manager: Judy Burt (continuing)  
 BONFIRE Editor: Sonia Wright (new)  
 BONFIRE Editorial Staff: Elin Bolt, Barb Purdy,  
     Jan Giroux, Tynka Dees  
 BONFIRE: Membership Address Changes:  
     Katherine Oven

Our Membership Committee has planned an **in-person Fall Gathering on September 25** -- don't miss it! We're all looking forward to seeing more than an 8 x 10 screen filled with little faces.

By the way, have you renewed your membership? Your dues are important to helping us adjust to changing conditions and continue our fight for equity for all.

## Guidelines for Opening Headquarters

Pamela Dougherty, Building & Properties Committee Chair

AAUW is now open for meetings and events based on the following guidelines:

Meetings must be coordinated through the Calendar in Charge ([calendar@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:calendar@aauwsanjose.org)).

Organizers of the meeting must request a Certification of Vaccine Status from each attendee (forms are available in the Kitchen). After obtaining the form, the organizer should keep a list of those who signed a form. A form is required only once and are kept confidential. The organizer need only ensure that the form has been filled out, and the completed form should be put in the B&P Chair's folder in the Sunroom. Please note that the form does not require that the person have a vaccination; also, the person may choose not to disclose their vaccination status on the form. In such cases, the person must wear a mask.

Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to wear a mask while at AAUW (indoors or outdoors) unless they desire to continue wearing one.

Individuals who are not fully vaccinated or have chosen not to disclose vaccination status, must wear a mask indoors at all times, unless alone in a private office with the door closed, and outdoors when it is not possible to maintain six feet of physical distance from others.

To support good ventilation, open windows whenever possible.

There is a hand sanitizer dispenser in the mudroom and hand sanitizer is available in the bathroom as well. Please feel free to use these to ensure your safety.

If you wish to mask up and have forgotten your mask, masks are available in the front entryway on the postcard cart.

If you or a member of your group have symptoms or tested positive for COVID, please do not enter the building. Please report such instances if you have been associating with AAUW members so we can file the necessary reporting.

## Notes from the Building & Properties Committee

Pamela Dougherty, Chair

Wanted: Does anyone have an office chair that needs a new home? We could use another one in the office. Please contact [Pam Dougherty](#) if you wish to donate a chair.

Use of Headquarters: With the new guidelines (see more details in this BONFIRE), we are opening up Headquarters. Please fill out the Certification of Vaccine Status when you next visit Headquarters, put it in an envelope to maintain your confidentiality, and place it in the B&P Chair's folder in the Sunroom. Forms are available in the Kitchen.



## NHN Bubbles and Budgets Returns!

Mary Jane Vitkovich & Bobbie Baker, Neighbors Helping Neighbors Chairs

Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN) will be meeting at Headquarters on Tuesday, September 7, at 6:30 pm. We will be reviving our Bubbles and Budget tradition! Bubbly beverages and light appetizers will be served to accompany our dazzling and sparkling conversations! Following the fizzy fun, we will be discussing this year's projects and budgets for the seven non-profits we support.

Are you a volunteer with a local non-profit that works with the homeless or economically disadvantaged featured in our monthly meetings? If so, and you are interested in becoming an active member, please contact either Bobbie Baker or Mary Jane Vitkovich at [neighbors@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:neighbors@aauwsanjose.org).

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## Communications Committee Communiqué

Elin Bolt and Peg Carlson-Bowen

As we anticipate a new year for our Branch, it's a good time for your Communications Committee to touch base as an introduction for newer members, or as a reminder for longer time members, of who is responsible for the various roles on our committee and how to contact them. In addition to Branch events, our BONFIRE newsletter, website, and Facebook page are tools we use to get the message out to the community about what our Branch is all about and what our impact on that community is now and strives to be in the future.

First, Ruth Dusan's term as the BONFIRE Editor ended as of July 1. We wholeheartedly thank her for her tireless dedication to producing an informative, interesting and beautiful newsletter each month. Replacing her as the new Editor will be our incoming Branch President, Sonia Wright. Welcome, and thank you for taking on this additional role, Sonia! We'd also like to welcome outgoing President Peg-Carlson-Bowen as the new Website Manager. Elin Bolt will now be acting as the back-up manager. Peg will also continue as our Facebook page manager.

The Communications Committee roles and role email contact information are as follows:

BONFIRE Editor: Sonia Wright - [BonfireEditor@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:BonfireEditor@aauwsanjose.org)

Website Manager: Peg Carlson-Bowen - [admin@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:admin@aauwsanjose.org)

Facebook Manager: Peg Carlson-Bowen - [Facebookmgr@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:Facebookmgr@aauwsanjose.org)

Shutterfly Manager: Elin Bolt - [photos@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:photos@aauwsanjose.org)

Calendar Manager: Tynka Dees - [calendar@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:calendar@aauwsanjose.org)

Role Email Manager: Elizabeth Guimarin - [admin@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:admin@aauwsanjose.org)

For general questions, or if you're just not sure whom to contact, you can send an email to [communications@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:communications@aauwsanjose.org).

Now is also a good time for committee/group chairs to review their respective content on the website and let us know if any changes need to be made. This is our "window to the world" so to speak, and keeping the content there as up to date as possible is very important.

Looking forward to an exciting and inspiring Branch year!

The Local Scholarship Committee gathered in Ruth Dusan's beautiful backyard at the end of June for a lovely potluck lunch to celebrate the year. Her husband Sorin took the picture and got a big smile out of everyone with his "Say, salami!"



**Back row:** Sonia Wright, Peg Carlson-Bowen, Marilyn Jackson, Sandra Savage, Erin Barrite, Virginia Beck, Mary Jane Vitkovich, Nell Aiello, **Middle row:** Tynka Dees, Judy Burt, Margaret Bard, Cheryl Markham, Ruth Dusan **Front row:** Rise Berry, Grace O'Leary, Nanci Eksterowicz



## New Members Profiles

**Danielle Apfelbaum** is currently an undergraduate at San Jose State University studying Psychology. She joined AAUW for the volunteer work and community involvement activities. She is interested in our 3rd Wednesday Programs, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, and Tech Trek. Welcome, Danielle.

**Sarah Foote** is currently an undergraduate at UC Santa Barbara studying Cell and Developmental Biology. She heard about AAUW from her mom. Sarah participated in Tech Trek in middle school. She decided to join AAUW for its Leadership opportunities, College and University Relations, and Mentorship. Sarah is interested in Gifts for Teens and Tech Trek. Welcome, Sarah.

**An Update on My Vu,  
Past Local Scholarship Recipient**  
Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee



My Vu was awarded a scholarship from Local Scholarship in 2020. As a senior year student at San Jose State University majoring in biochemistry, the scholarship from AAUW removed the financial burden and allowed her to fully devote herself to her studies. The past two semesters were two of the most challenging in her college experience, being enrolled in several advanced courses including Organic Chemistry and Physical Chemistry. My is grateful for the support from AAUW which she credits as one of the important factors that contributed to her success so far. Thanks to the AAUW scholarship, she was able to focus all of her attention on her schoolwork which helped her to receive A's in all of her courses.

My's goal is to become a Physician Assistant (PA). In order to strengthen her applications to PA schools, she will volunteer for one month in a full-time Certified Nursing Assistant program and another six weeks shadowing medical practitioners, both in order to gain Patient Care Experience, a prerequisite for PA school acceptance. Then she will complete her undergraduate studies at SJSU and graduate in the fall of 2022.

When asked about what she does just for fun, My replied "Helping others has always been my passion. I teach children in my church on Saturdays as a leader of VEYM (Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement). I enjoy seeing smiles on the children's faces which helps me reduce stress from my studies ... they are my hobbies."

### **New Members Profiles continued**

**Amelia (Amy) Jackson** heard about AAUW from two friends, Melinda Swanson and Gail Hicks, and decided to join for AAUW's interest groups and to make new friends. She holds a BS and MSW from UC Berkeley. She is a family therapist and individual therapist. Amelia is interested in joining many interest groups. Welcome, Amy.

**Peggy Maibaum** was a dual member from 2008 to 2019. She rejoined as a dual member (her primary branch is Los Gatos). She is interested in the CAPS programs: Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Local Scholarship, and Tech Trek and many interest groups. She graduated from University of Colorado (BA Education) and San Jose State University (MA Counseling). Peggy is retired. She worked as a teacher and a fundraising consultant. Welcome back, Peggy.

**Malu Roldan** is a returning member. She is interested in Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Public Policy, and our 3rd Wednesday Programs and many interest groups. Malu is a professor. She received her PhD in Management from UCLA. Welcome back, Malu.

## NCCWSL (affectionately called Nickwhistle)

The National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) was held virtually for two days in late May. More than 400 college students and AAUW members from across the U.S. attended virtually to learn how to advance leadership skills from professionals in their field.

Our branch supported two students to attend. Raquel Garcia graduated from SJSU with a major in public health and a minor in chemistry and is currently applying to medical schools. Lauren Chun graduated from SJSU with a chemical engineering degree and is moving to NYC to attend graduate school at Columbia University. Here is the link to [Lauren Chun's reflections](#). Here is [Raquel Garcia's short video](#).

## M&Ms (Marketing and Membership)

This year the AAUW-CA board is focused on M&Ms. They've identified four workgroups:

\*Working Age Recruitment Workgroup – Will investigate methods to attract the younger population with messages and content that resonate with their needs and interests. Chair: Crystal Stebbins

\*Retirement Age Recruitment Workgroup – Will develop strategies to engage individuals who are at or approaching retirement age. Chair: Sharyn Siebert

\*University and Organization Collaboration Workgroup – Will leverage the College/University program to expose more college students to AAUW and investigate other organizations for collaborative programs. Chair: Michelle Galaz-Miller

\*Social Media Workgroup – Will expand the strategic use of social media platforms to engage different populations with relevant messaging. Chair: Sandi Gabe

## These are the current AAUW dues, as of July 1, 2021.

National: \$62\*, raised from \$59 (less than a latté) Official Life Members and 50-year life members - \$0

State \$20 (remains the same) 50-year life members and past state presidents: \$0

Branch \$26 Branch may exempt 50-year life members

C/U Membership: National \$175, State \$0, Branch N/A

Memberships for students of AAUW C/U Members: National \$0, State \$0

Students of Non-AAUW C/U members: National \$18.81, State \$10

Shape the Future: for new members who join at a public event: National \$31, State \$20, Branch \$26

\*Tax Deductibility: \$59 of the \$62 National fee is tax-deductible as a charitable contribution.

AAUW National's proposed bylaws amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for membership [did not pass](#)...again. BUT, a large number of our California members took the time to click a box and hit SEND. Thank you for expressing your opinion. Usually, people don't want to hear it.



**AUGUST 2021**

Submitted by Tynka Dees, Calendar Editor

**AAUW is open for meetings and events based on the following guidelines:**

Organizer of the meeting must request a certification of vaccine status form from each attendee. Please see details in this BONFIRE. Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to wear a mask while at AAUW (indoors or outdoors) unless they desire to continue wearing one. Individuals who are not fully vaccinated or who have chosen not to disclose vaccination status, must wear a mask at all times indoors unless alone in a private office with the door closed, and any time outdoors if it is not possible to maintain six feet of physical distance from others. Open windows to increase air flow when meeting indoors. If you or a member of your group have symptoms or tested positive for COVID, please do not enter the building. Please report such instances if you have been associating with AAUW members so we can file the necessary reporting. Some meetings this month may change whether they are meeting in person or not so please check with the organizer.

Tue Aug 3	10:30-11:30 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
Wed Aug 4	5- 6:30 pm	AAUW Board Set Up ( <a href="#">Sonia Wright</a> )
	6:30-7 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour ( <a href="#">Sonia Wright</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	AAUW BOARD Meeting ( <a href="#">Sonia Wright</a> )
Thu Aug 5	1-3pm	Knitting Know How (RSVP <a href="#">Margaret McCartney</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	Public Policy Committee ZOOM ( <a href="#">Susan Karlins</a> )

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Sun Aug 8	11:30 am-1:30 pm	Film Fans TBA (RSVP <a href="#">Linda Snashall</a> )
Mon Aug 9	6:30- 8:30 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP <a href="#">Cheryl Markman</a> )
Tue Aug 10	10:30-11:30 am	Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
Wed Aug 11	11am-1pm	Art Appreciation ( <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )
Sat Aug 14	6:30-9:30 pm	Couples Dining (RSVP <a href="#">Cheryl Markman</a> )

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Mon Aug 16	6:30-8:30 pm	International Gourmet (RSVP <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )
Tue Aug 17	10:30-11:30 am	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
	1-3pm	Knitting Know How (RSVP <a href="#">Margaret McCartney</a> )
Thu Aug 19	7-8:30 pm	Mystery Lovers TBD ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )

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Mon Aug 23	9:30-11 am	Building and Properties Committee ZOOM ( <a href="#">Pamela Dougherty</a> )
Tue Aug 24	12-1 pm	Lunch Bunch TBA ( <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	Great Decisions PM TBD ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )

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Tynka Dees, Calendar Editor; Jan Giroux,  
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**Distribution:** Ruth Dusan & Linda Guyer

**Change of Address:** Katherine Oven

**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.

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**PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE PAID**

AAUW San Jose Branch *Established 1909*

## Save the Date



**2021 Fall Gathering**  
**Saturday, September 25**  
**10 am - 11:30 am**  
**Willow Glen United Methodist Church**  
**(Across the street from Headquarters)**  
**Kohlstedt Hall**



**1420 Newport Avenue (corner of Minnesota and Newport)**

Due to Covid restrictions, packaged breakfast treats, coffee and tea will be served outdoors only starting at 9:30 am. Come and meet new members. Catch up with familiar faces. Bring a friend or two who might be interested.

Drawing from the deep well of the expertise of AAUW San Jose members, this year's speaker is our Membership Treasurer, Katherine Oven, who spent her career as a civil engineer specializing in water issues in the Bay Area. Come learn about California's complex water supply and how to be water wise.



*Empowering Women Since 1881*

See the San Jose Branch Website at [www.aauwsanjose.org](http://www.aauwsanjose.org) for more information