



President's Corner

By Sonia Wright

Employees in our unit at work are being challenged to develop and complete an individual learning and development plan on racial justice and equity. First, we completed a survey and then we chose from a category of resources: Starting Out, Building Momentum and Wading In. Each of the categories includes books, videos and podcasts.

Books, streaming services and websites can be found in the Martin Luther King Library/San Jose Public Library system, or on Amazon. Some of the books in the MLK/SJPL include *America is Not the Heart* by Elaine Castillo, *Elsewhere, Home* by Leila Aboulela, *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan, *Story Teller* by Leslie Marmon Silko, *Hot Comb* by Ebony Flower, *Good Talk: A Memoir in Conversations* by Mira Jacobs, *Born a Crime: Stories from South African Childhood*, *Dear America, Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* by Jose Antonia Vargas, *Disability Visibility* by Alice Wong, *Funny in Farsi: A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America* and many, many more. I prefer books, but I may watch some of the TED talks, or suggested videos from Netflix and HBO Max (if I can ever get the clicker away from Joe). I haven't listened to *The Kinswomen*, *Seeing White* or *Still Processing*. I still have a week and a half to make my plan—I wouldn't want to be the first one to turn in my homework assignment (that's a joke).

As you expand your Diversity, Equity and Inclusion knowledge (a pillar of AAUW), you can check out some of these resources. Or, if you've read any of the books and you think it's one I should read, let me know.



I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter

Erika L. Sanchez ([SJPL](#))

Local Scholarship Project Awarded \$10,000 Grant

Diane Trombetta, Local Scholarship Committee

We are happy to announce that Local Scholarship has been awarded a \$10,000 Investment Grant from 100 Women Charitable Foundation. We were among six finalists. Many deserving non-profits applied for a grant: Latinas Contra Cancer, Peninsula Food Runners, One Life Counseling Center, Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley, and Silicon Valley Urban Debate League. Given the strong competition among extremely deserving projects, we were honored to be among the finalists. This \$10,000 gift will enable us to award at least two additional scholarships, or to increase the support we give to several students. Thank you, 100 Women



Monika Ryser demonstrated her alphorn and gave a little bit of history on the instrument at the Coffee & Convo Membership event on February 25.

AAUW Annual Dues to Increase in Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Katherine Oven, Membership Committee

Membership renewal for the coming fiscal year (FY 2023-24) will kick off in early May. As set by the National staff in October 2020, the annual Association dues will be \$72 for this next fiscal year, a \$5 increase over last year's dues.

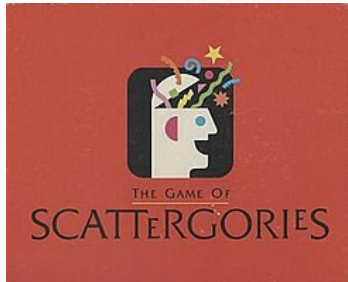
There is no change in State and Branch dues for FY 2023-24. When renewal forms are mailed out to all Branch members in early May, the \$118 in annual dues for regular members will reflect the following elements:

Association Dues - \$72 (\$69 of this fee is tax-deductible)

State Dues - \$20

Branch Dues - \$26

As in the past, 50-Year Honorary Members pay no dues. Association Life Members will continue paying \$46 annually (for State and Branch dues). In-state Dual Members will be charged \$26 for their second branch membership. Out-of-state Dual Members will be charged \$46 (CA State and San Jose Branch dues). College and university Association membership fees will remain unchanged.



Games Day Event

Sarah Janigian

The Games Day event held on February 15 was a success. Spirited games of Scattergories and Mexican Train were played, and those attending had a great time. Thank you to Program chairperson Bobbie Baker for planning this afternoon/evening of fun and friendship.

There is scientific research that says playing games is not just for kids. HelpGuide, an organization that promotes mental health and wellness, says that "play can be an important source of relaxation and stimulation for adults. Playing with friends can fuel your imagination, creativity, and problem-solving abilities, and is good for emotional well-being." For those of us in AAUW, this would be another way to enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie of our friends and members.

There is renewed interest in forming a "Let's Play Games" Interest Group. Please contact [Sarah Janigian](#) if you would like to get something started. If there is enough interest, dates/times of play will be mutually agreed upon. Also, any Mahjong players out there? Can you teach Mahjong? Let Sarah know if Mahjong is your game and if you would like to get something started.



Gifts for Teens - Gratitude from Teens

Cheryl Markman, Gifts for Teens

Included in the 2022 Gifts for Teens gift bags was a QR code with which the recipients were able to access a survey asking for feedback about the contents. Here are some of the results; bottom line, GFT has a new meaning – Gratitude from Teens.

From an agency worker, "Our clients often show up with nothing, or with a black garbage bag filled with some clothes and personal items. To be able to give them a sturdy duffel bag with new clothes and essentials is important! To have something that truly belongs to them means so much."

One of the recipients said, "I was sad about not being able to be with my family at holiday time, but the gift duffel bag brightened my day, and gave me a feeling of hope."

Another teen stated, "Thank you for the new sweatshirt and tee-shirts. Wearing them to a job interview, helped me feel more confident."

Another teen said, "It is always hard to put true gratitude into just words because they never truly explain my feelings. For no matter what is in the bag, it is the thoughtfulness that this thank you goes out to."

And from another recipient, "I broke my leg, and in the cold, I get a ton of pain. The blanket and sweatshirt will certainly help me out by keeping me warm."

Some of the other comments included the following.

I think the gift bags are perfect and very helpful with the gift cards and everything else inside.

I think this was the most amazing gift I have got.

Thank you a million times. This will be the best Christmas for me!

I'm really grateful for the variety in items and the practicality of all of them!

All of the items are from a very good quality and love them.

Thank you for always helping us. You are our angels.

You guys are awesome!

Your gift was amazing.

I liked the socks because all of my socks were ripped.

I liked everything but especially the gift cards. I was able to buy Christmas gifts for my whole family.

I liked everything, especially the coloring book and coloring pencils for my daughter.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors Donation Drives

Mary Jane Vitkovich, Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Our monthly NHN meeting was especially lively on March 6. Members assembled 80 lunch sacks and packaged a total of 150 pairs of women's and men's underwear for Front Door Communities. These items will be given out to unhoused people in the downtown San Jose area. A great big thank you to Karelle Cornwell and Peggy Maibaum for purchasing the items and coordinating the project.

Our next donation drive will be held on Saturday, April 22, from 10 am to 12 pm. We will be collecting peanut butter and boxes of cereal for Santa Maria Urban Ministry. The collection will take place in the parking lot during the Coffee & Convo gathering. We hope to see you there!



Karelle Cornwell

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 Turns 60 -- Still Work to Do

Peg Carlson-Bowen, Public Policy Committee

On June 10, 2023, we mark the 60th anniversary of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA) which is a federal law that prohibits pay discrimination on the basis of sex. Despite the passage of this law more than a half a century ago, women still do not take home wages equal to those of their male peers. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is the federal agency charged with enforcing this and other employment discrimination laws. There's more work to do, and AAUW's mission is to do it!

What does the EPA say? "No employer ... shall discriminate, within any establishment in which such employees are employed, between employees on the basis of sex by paying wages to employees in such establishment at a rate less than the rate at which he pays wages to employees of the opposite sex in such establishment for equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions, except where such payment is made pursuant to (i) a seniority system; (ii) a merit system; (iii) a system which measures earnings by quantity or quality of production; or (iv) a differential based on any other factor other than sex."

What is the difference between the Equal Pay Act and Title VII? Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is broader in scope than the EPA. While the EPA only prohibits discrimination based on sex regarding wages, Title VII bars many forms of employment discrimination (including, for example, discrimination in hiring, firing, and promotions as well as in pay). Title VII also protects classes in addition to sex (including race, color, religion, and national origin).

What can we do? While the pay gap has narrowed since the passage of the Equal Pay Act, progress has largely stalled due to weak remedies and limited enforcement tools. The Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA) would provide a much-needed update to the Equal Pay Act. The Paycheck Fairness Act would take meaningful steps to update and strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to help close the gender pay gap, including:

- closing loopholes
- creating more robust remedies
- preventing employers from retaliating
- prohibiting employers from relying on salary history to set wages
- providing training and technical assistance, data collection and research

Urge your Senators to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act -- become a Two-Minute Activist [here](#)!





New Member Profiles

Claire Campodonico

CINDY HANSEN has lived in Willow Glen with her husband for over 30 years. She has often noticed our building and signage. Deciding to inquire and learn more, she attended our January Coffee & Convo. Now, she looks forward to participating in the advancement of our mission. In 1982, Cindy graduated from the University of Florida with a BS in Accounting. She is a Certified Public Accountant and is employed as the Chief Financial Officer for McLarney Construction. She also loves to savor good wine and travel.

CATHY HJELT is also a Willow Glen resident. She learned of AAUW at the Women's Leadership Conference, where our diversity of offerings appealed to her. Cathy earned her BA in Child Development from San Jose State University in 1991. She is employed as a Victim Advocate by Santa Clara County's District Attorney's Office. In tandem with that role, she also works for the Children's Advocacy Center, aiding abused children. Her job has a light touch in that she is accompanied by a lovely, caring facility dog, Darcy, as she navigates these difficult issues.

BONNIE MARCUS was referred by her friend and neighbor, Monika Ryser. Bonnie graduated from Northern Arizona University in 1980 with a BS in Political Science. During her career in the juvenile justice system, she served as Arizona's State Director of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates). Bonnie and her family moved to California 12 years ago. She is married with three adult children and six young grandchildren. Among her hobbies are reading, traveling and delving into the area of Public Policy.

CARMEL McSHERA, a native of Ireland, earned her Master's degree in Physics from the National University of Ireland in 1982. In 1984, she relocated to the United States for work. Her career has been in Process Engineering and Engineering Management. She became aware of AAUW through social media and NextDoor. Carmel and her husband have raised two daughters, and now she enjoys reading, knitting and hiking. She also looks forward to joining our book clubs and Knitting Know How.

VICKI RATNER, who lives in Los Gatos, graduated from Columbia University, where she earned a BS. She continued her education at the State University of New York's Syracuse Medical School and at the Albert Einstein School of Medicine in New York, where she had her residency in Orthopedics. She is the founder and president emeritus of the Interstitial Cystitis Association. She now works with ESSIC (International Society for the Study of Bladder Pain Syndrome) as a co-chair of the Patient Advocacy Committee.

JANE HUBERT received her BA in History from San Jose State University in 1971. Her neighbor, our longtime member Margaret Bard, had spoken to Jane about the mission of AAUW and had encouraged Jane to join our Branch. After being a teacher for 42 years, Jane retired in 2013. She taught in the Oak Grove School District, grades one through eight, in both mainstream and gifted curriculum classes. Jane also volunteers her time and energy at several non-profits, including Uplift Family Service's Butter Paddle in Los Gatos.

VALERIE MERKLIN earned her BA from Ohio State University in 1989 as well as her MBA from the University of Houston in 1999. She enjoys her career in Real Estate. She first learned of AAUW through the Willow Glen Business Association, of which she is a member. Valerie was a member of our Branch in 2016 and has now decided to rejoin us. She looks forward to being more involved in various activities, perhaps Art Appreciation, Light Gourmet and Weekend Walkers, after being somewhat isolated during the pandemic.



Spotlight on Jane Vivian

Ruth Dusan and Grace O'Leary

It was such a pleasure to meet Jane Vivian at our Fall Gathering on October 29, 2022. We thank you for your participation in this project. Stay well and fabulous.

How did you discover AAUW San Jose?

Jane Vivian: I was introduced to AAUW while a senior at UCLA in 1947, and wanted to be a part of it, but decided to wait until I could fully participate. After a short career in Los Angeles, I married and moved to San Jose in 1953 and started watching for information about AAUW.

How long have you been a member of AAUW?

In 1954, they held a Fall Membership Event and I joined. I immediately became active in several sections and attended general meetings regularly.

What do you like most about being a member of AAUW?

I loved being part of an organization of women that promoted the same ideals that I held, was open to all (qualified) women, met at convenient times for a new mother, offered opportunities to develop friendships and continue my informal education. I had opportunities to take part in studies, projects and activities that I found very worthwhile, and had fun doing them.

Is there anything else we can do to improve membership experience?

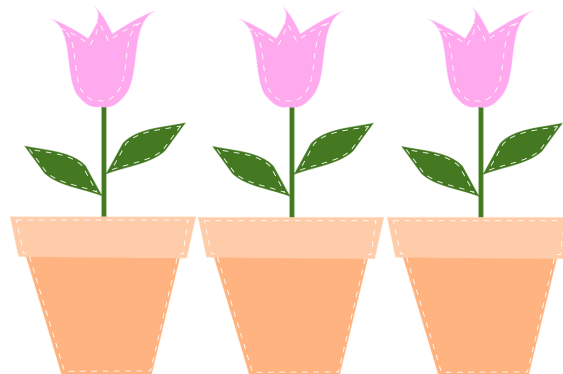
AAUW has continued to do all this, and much more. At age 95, I can no longer take an active part, but continue to admire and support the aims and vision of AAUW.

What would you like members to know about you?

Life has been good to me. With good health and the means to live comfortably in Willow Glen, I have taken an active part in school, community and church affairs and I am still able to live here, with one of my daughters' assistance. I travel occasionally to visit my two other daughters in San Diego. There are five grandchildren and my first great-grandchild, a girl, is expected momentarily. I am thankful for the part that AAUW has played in my life and wish the organization and this branch continued success.

How would you like to be remembered?

I would like to be remembered as a person who took an active part in AAUW when I could, tried to carry out responsibilities for jobs I held, treated others with respect and kindness and enjoyed life throughout.



April 2023

Submitted by Tynka Dees Calendar Editor:

Santa Clara County has removed our mask requirement for indoor meetings. If any member is uncomfortable with unmasked members or simply wishes to remain safe, **masks are always welcome**. If you are un-vaccinated, we would appreciate it if you wore a mask. If you are a leader of the group meeting please keep a sign in sheet, just in case we need it for checking contacts in future. Please check with the organizer whether the meeting has changed and will be ZOOM or in person.

Mon Apr 3	10 am-1 pm	Bridge 1 st Monday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
	6:30-8 pm	Neighbors Helping Neighbors ZOOM (Bobbie Baker)
Tue Apr 4	10-11 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
Thu Apr 6	2-3 pm	Great Decisions AM Master Class Video Presentation (Monique Lee)
	7-8:30 pm	Public Policy Committee ZOOM (Susan Karlins)
Sat Apr 8	6:30-9:30 pm	Couples Dining (RSVP Karen Hook)
Mon Apr 10	6:30- 9:30 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP Cheryl Markman)
Tue Apr 11	10-1130 am	Book Discussion AM Finding the Mother Tree by Suzanne Simard (Lida Kluzek)
	10-11 am	Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	5:30 -6 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour ZOOM ((Sonia Wright))
	6- 7:30 pm	AAUW BOARD Meeting ZOOM ((Sonia Wright))
Wed Apr 12	11 am-1 pm	Art Appreciation (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
	7-830 pm	Wednesday Night Book Group Remember: The Science of Memory and the Art of Forgetting by Lisa Genooa (RSVP Renee Sommerfeld)
Thu Apr 13	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
	1-4 pm	Bridge 2 nd Thursday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
Fri Apr 14	9:30 am-2 pm	Duplicate Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Mon Apr 17	9:30-11am	Exploring World Literature Hybrid Founding Mothers by Cokie Roberts (RSVP Diana Taylor)
	6:30-9 pm	International Gourmet (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
Tue Apr 18	10-11 am	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	1-3 pm	Knitting Know How (RSVP Margaret McCartney)
Thu Apr 20	10 am-12 pm	Family History (Susan Brundage)
	2-3 pm	Great Decisions AM Master Class Video Presentation (Monique Lee)
	7-8:30 pm	Mystery Lovers ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Fri Apr 21	10 am-1 pm	Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Apr 22	10 am- 12 pm	Prospective Members and Member Meeting Coffee and Conversation Back porch (Membership@aauwsanjose.org) with Neighbors Helping Neighbors Drive (Bobbie Baker)
Mon Apr 24	9:30-11 am	Building and Properties Committee (Paul Bowen)
Tue Apr 25	12-1:30 pm	Lunch Bunch (Diana Taylor)
	1-4 pm	Bridge 4 th Tuesday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
	7-8:30 pm	Great Decisions PM ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Thu Apr 27	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
Fri Apr 28	1:30- 3:30 pm	Local Scholarship Hybrid (Tynka Dees)

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AAUW BONFIRE San Jose Branch *Established 1909*

KINDNESS submittals for April



Friendships
between women, as
any woman will
tell you, are built of
a thousand small
kindnesses...swapped
back and forth and
over again.

MICHELLE OBAMA

"Being kind to yourself,
regardless of whether or not
you can achieve your goals,
actually helps you achieve
them more quickly."

- Shahroo Izadi, The Kindness Method



Empowering Women Since 1881

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