



January Program Event - The League of Women Voters

Saturday, January 20, 2024, 1:30 to 3 pm

**Location: Willow Glen United Methodist Church-Wesley Room
1420 Newport Ave, San Jose**

Ruth Dusan, Program Vice President

"In reality, there is no such thing as not voting: you either vote by voting, or you vote by staying home and tacitly doubling the value of some diehard's vote." Writer David Foster Wallace in Rolling Stone, 2000

In our mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research, we present to you the League of Women Voters (LWV) for our January program. The LWV, led by Martha Beattie, will be joining us to introduce and explain what to expect on the March 2024 ballot, propositions, and measures, including Voters Edge, a very helpful tool, that will make us absolutely more informed about the elections. Mark your calendar and prepare your questions. If you are attending, please click here to [RSVP/REGISTER: Yes or No](#).

"Portraits of the Past" Historic Fashion Show

Pam Dougherty

In honor of Women's History Month, our Branch will present an historic fashion show by History San Jose, "Portraits of the Past," on Saturday, March 16, 2024. The presentation will be from 1 to 2 pm at Willow Glen United Methodist Church, 1420 Newport Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125. Please save the date to experience historically accurate clothing with stories from the past.

Apartment or ADU Wanted

Diana Taylor

My daughter, Elizabeth, and her husband are hosting a newly-arrived young Ukrainian family for the next several weeks and are helping them with all of the details of getting settled. That includes finding more permanent housing, job searches, medical resources, etc. They are a college-educated couple and have financial resources. If you have, or know of someone who has, an apartment or ADU that would be suitable for a highly motivated couple with children ages 7 years and 18 months, please contact [Elizabeth Cox](#). All leads will be much appreciated.



President's Corner by Linda Goldberg

I recently read that there are 29 holidays between November 1 and January 15 for seven major religions - no wonder everyone is feeling a little exhausted at this time of year! If you find yourself with some quiet time in all of the hustle and bustle, take a moment to check out the [AAUW-CA website](#). They have made many improvements, making it easy to find information you may need or are just curious about. It includes over 50 links covering the many activities the state sponsors, as well as helpful information for branch leaders and members.

I want to thank our Technology Update Committee for all their time and expertise. They spent many hours researching various hardware and software options and have come up with a purchase that will help all of us to function more smoothly. During the month of January, our various files and documents will be migrated to the new computer, with professional help overseen by the Committee.

Also beginning in January, the Nominating Committee will start the job of filling positions for the 2024-25 Board. I urge you to consider saying "yes" if you are called. A Board position will take a few more hours of your time each month, but the health and vitality of the Branch depends on having a few people willing to spend that extra time. If you haven't served on the Board and would like to be more active in the Branch, consider getting in touch with someone on the Nominating Committee, or me, and volunteering for a position. We all would be happy to hear from you. You might want to share an area of expertise you have, or take the opportunity to learn something new. Remember, positions may be co-chaired if you want to share the responsibilities - but it all starts with "YES!"

As 2024 begins, I wish each of you a year filled with everything that makes you happy.

NEW INTEREST GROUP

I recently re-joined AAUW. I am looking for people who want to play Mahjong at least once a week. All levels are welcome, including beginners. If interested, please email or call.

Thank you,
Shelley Powers
shelleypow@yahoo.com



Tech Trek San Jose Is Looking for a New Home

Cheryl Markman, Tech Trek

Not to worry, Tech Trek is still going strong! As you may know, in past years we have sent our Tech Trek campers to Stanford University. However, in 2022 we sent our campers to Fresno State University, a two and a half-hour drive, and in 2023 we sent our campers to Sonoma State University, a two-hour drive. This was solely because those were the closest camps available.

This year we are hoping to send our campers to a camp closer to San Jose, perhaps at Santa Clara University or again at Stanford University, but this can happen only if we are able to provide enough people willing to staff the camp on our behalf. Therefore, we are looking for volunteers who are willing to serve as a dorm mom, teacher, camp director, camp treasurer or camp nurse. All camp staff must be female and all but the teachers must be AAUW members.

Anyone interested in helping fill one of these positions can contact [Tech Trek](#) for a job description or more information. Please help these young women to further their interest in STEM and to advance their future in related careers.

Coffee and Convo

Peg Carlson-Bowen, Membership Committee

We've had a bit of a break during these busy Holiday times, but our regular Coffee & Convo get-together will resume in January! Join us at Headquarters Saturday, January 27, 10 am-noon inside (and on the back porch, weather permitting). We had an ad in the San Jose Woman's Club Holiday House tour brochure, inviting those attendees to join us. Come meet some new friends and share high points of your holidays. Happy 2024.



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Bobbie Baker, Co-Chair

Neighbors Helping Neighbors is sponsoring a second drive for all sorts of winter clothes for Santa Maria Urban Ministries on January 27 from 10 – noon. This will coincide with Coffee and Convo so after dropping off your donation, have a cup of coffee and visit!

Judy Burt delivered a large collection of children's books and stuffed toys to Next Door Solutions in December. Thanks to all our generous members who contributed!

KEEPING THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT ALIVE 365

Local Scholarship Program Report

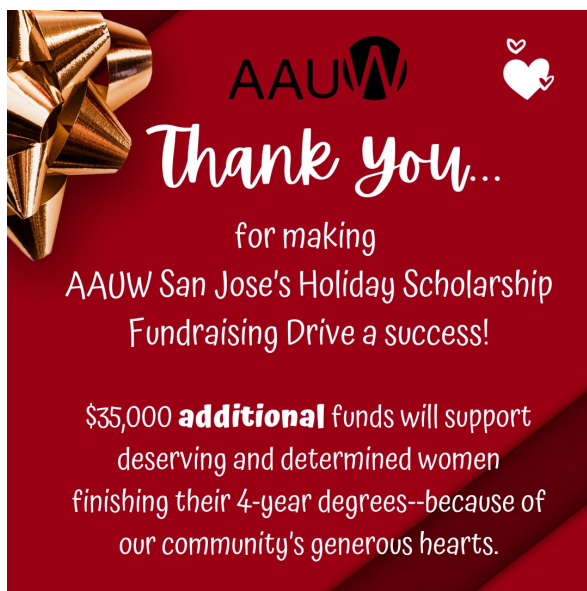
On November 18, over 40 AAUW San Jose Branch members and guests gathered at the Willow Glen Methodist Church to kick off the Holiday season with a program of information and inspiration. The information was about how to support our branch’s Community Action Projects-- thus triggering a serotonin, oxytocin, and dopamine boost to the brain. Who would have guessed that joining the AAUW Legacy Circle, or opening a donor-advised fund, or giving away an IRA minimum distribution, or donating stock or cash to the Interbranch Special Projects Foundation, would trigger a “helper’s high?” Our inspiration came from the testimonials of a Local Scholarship recipient and a now grownup Tech Trekker, plus anecdotes from our Gifts For Teens and Neighbors Helping Neighbors representatives, and the heartwarming story behind the Edie Kerr scholarship. With the addition of lively entertainment and lavish refreshments, this gathering reminded us of the joy of giving, which we can enjoy throughout the year.

Special thanks to our speakers (in order of appearance): Diane Trombetta, Tynka Dees, Linda Goldberg, Barbara Snyder, Margaret Bard, Virginia Turner, Aaron Correll, Eva Levine, Elaine Benoit, Sarah Foote, Sofia Vartanian, Mary Jane Vitkovich. Thank you to our wonderful musicians: UKooLadies, and Songstruck quartet. Thank you to our set-up crew Kathy Myers (refreshments), Judy Blegen, Sharon Bouska, Mary Jane Vitkovich, Erin Barrite, and Erika Engebretson. (table settings)

Give the Gift of Education

Sharon Bouska, Local Scholarship Co-Chair

Thank you to all our members, families and friends who generously supported Local Scholarship’s fundraising campaign. In next month’s BONFIRE we will report the final dollar amount raised, and the winners of the raffle prizes. Again, a great big thank you to our Interest Groups who collected over \$500 in gift cards. Enough to fill two giant wreaths.



Public Policy/Advocacy

Susan Karlins

Our AAUW San Jose Public Policy/Advocacy group will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, January 17, 7 p.m. at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87531558423?pwd=Z0t4dTEvMTBsN00rYnBaSWZTbz1EZz09>. We'll be planning for 2024, including supporting California State legislation, voter engagement for the upcoming elections, soon-to-be-released Title IX changes and any support for Santa Clara County Title IX Coordinators, protecting our local public schools from book banning, among others. We'll continue to pay attention to local issues that impact women. (In December we wrote letters to support to Santa Clara County to continue an OB-GYN urgent care clinic for low-resourced women and to the East Valley Community College Board to continue funding for their women's resource center.) Come join our January meeting and learn more or offer suggestions!

Starting later in January, AAUW CA will evaluate new bills introduced in the state legislature which are aligned with our Public Policy Priorities: Economic Security for All Women, Equal Access to Quality Public Education for All Students, Social and Racial Justice for All Members of Society, and Increased Representation of Women in Leadership Roles. In early March, they will meet to discuss our evaluations and select 30-35 bills for our 2024 Legislative Agenda that best represent our priorities. Three bills will be chosen to advocate for during Lobby Days.

Lobby Days 2024 will take place April 2 and 3, with most meetings scheduled via Zoom.

This year, AAUW California (not our Branch) will schedule meetings with the legislative offices and assemble teams of AAUW members and college students, matching them with Assembly and Senate districts. Training materials on the bills and the event will be posted on the state website in mid-March, and a mandatory training webinar will be held on March 25, 2024. Look for communication with AAUW CA Public Policy to learn more or check their website at <https://www.aauw-ca.org/public-policy/> or read their newsletter at <https://www.aauw-ca.org/documents/2023/12/aauw-public-policy-newsletter-december-2023.pdf>



**An Update on a Two-Time
AAUW Scholarship Recipient Chloe Ettinger**
Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee



Chloe Ettinger received an AAUW Local Scholarship in 2021 and a second one in 2022. After graduating from San Francisco State University in Spring 2023, she submitted applications to several veterinary schools. So far, she has received interview invitations from UC Davis and the University of Missouri, and she is eagerly waiting to hear from the others.

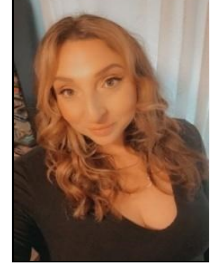
In the meantime, Chloe has a new job at an emergency veterinary hospital in San Jose. As in her previous job at a small animal hospital, she is a Veterinary Assistant where she helps care for both inpatients and outpatients. She says, "it is really interesting to see how emergency medicine works," noting that "it's a lot different from general practice!" She has also been participating in ride-alongs with a large-animal veterinarian who sees horses, cows, goats, alpacas and more! Although she is not currently volunteering at the Wildlife Center as she was doing when we first profiled her, they are merging with the Peninsula Humane Society and building a new facility, so she will most likely return once all that is settled.

Additionally, Chloe has another new job, working for a national party company that coordinates themed events. She is a travel DJ for "The Taylor Party," which presents Taylor Swift-themed events. She says it is a very fun job (ya think?!). So far, she has been sent to Santa Cruz, CA, Nashua, NH, Worcester, MA, Berkeley, CA, and Boise, ID where she DJ'd for an event called "Ken's Mojo Dojo Casa Rave," inspired by the "Barbie" movie and which had a 90's-early 2000's theme.

Besides her DJ job (which sounds more like play than work!), Chloe still enjoys designing and producing new products for her online sticker store. Although she doesn't have as much time for roller skating as before, she says she "still gets plenty of exercise hauling around the DJ equipment. It is quite heavy!"

An Update on a Two-Time AAUW Scholarship Recipient Danielle Apfelbaum

Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee



Danielle Apfelbaum received an AAUW Local Scholarship in 2021 and a second one in 2022. She expects to graduate in the spring of 2024 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. She has maintained a 3.89 GPA while taking full time classes, working full time and raising her 18-month-old son. After graduation, Danielle intends to enter a master's program for counseling. She is so grateful for the opportunity the AAUW program has given her and hopes to be able to engage and meet more of us as her load is lessened in the future.

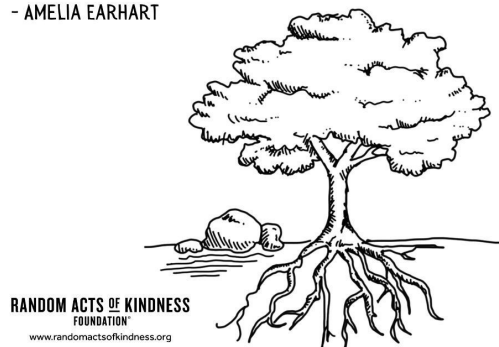
Sadly, Danielle lost her father in October and that added a layer of intensity to this semester that she could not have anticipated. She is continuing to move forward with as much strength as she can muster and honor him. She says that going back to school and finishing her degree meant so much to her dad. As saddened as she is that he won't be physically present, she knows he will be with her as she walks across that stage.

Danielle continues to work full time as a behavioral therapist at a non-profit contracted with San Jose Unified. This year she is at Willow Glen Middle School. Her job is still the same, wherein all of the classes she serves are special education, mostly on the autism spectrum, helping the teachers with managing behavioral issues in the classroom and supporting them in reinforcing positive behaviors. Although she notes that "the older grades come with their own benefits and challenges, my kids this year are so fun, and I love my job."

As for free time, Danielle says she is so busy with school and work that it is rare that her free time doesn't involve taking her son to gain new experiences. They take lots of walks in the park and visits to Happy Hollow and Gilroy Gardens. She hopes to get back into yoga and doing a little more self-care activities soon.

"A SINGLE ACT OF KINDNESS THROWS OUT
ROOTS IN ALL DIRECTIONS, AND THE ROOTS
SPRING UP AND MAKE NEW TREES."

- AMELIA EARHART



Spotlight on Elaine Benoit

Ruth Dusan and Grace O'Leary



How did you discover AAUW-San Jose?

After several moves and with two toddlers in tow, I found myself in yet another new community, knowing no one. I joined AAUW in Southern California to meet interesting women and also joined a diversity study group. Upon moving to San Jose, I immediately connected with the local Branch and have remained a member ever since.

How long have you been a member of AAUW?

I've been a member for 50 years. Active or not, I renewed my dues yearly because I support AAUW's equity mission.

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

AAUW members' enthusiasm for learning is contagious! Branch membership has allowed me to participate in stimulating projects and meet involved caring women. This Branch offers choices of numerous varied interest groups, opportunities to hone leadership skills and provided me with fun, lasting friendships. Through the years I have held most Board offices.

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

I encourage the Branch to continue actively promoting AAUW's visibility in San Jose, attracting younger members through meaningful action projects and public policy outreach.

What would you like members to know about you?

I am challenged by action projects out in the community and value my public policy involvement. After identifying a need, finding that holiday gifts were scarce for local poor teenagers, I began Gifts for Teens. The duffel bags and totes stuffed with fun and useful items are given to local low-income, homeless and foster care teenagers. Over 25 years, amazingly 14,250 bags and gift baskets have been distributed! I have enjoyed working with science-minded middle-school girls through my 15 years of direct involvement in AAUW Tech Trek. Oh, and I like to travel in Europe, fly fish, ski, and entertain family and friends.

How would you like to be remembered?

I enjoy being involved and helping others - especially having a "soft-spot" for teenagers. I see myself as friendly, creative, energetic, intellectually curious and having effective leadership and organizational skills.

January 2024

Submitted by Tynka Dees Calendar Editor

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. **The most up to date calendar is always on our website.**

Mon Jan 1	10 am-1 pm	Bridge 1 st Monday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
Tue Jan 2	10-11 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	PM Time To Be Determined	Film Fans (RSVP Nancy Wheeler)
	6:30-8 pm	Neighbors Helping Neighbors (Bobbie Baker)
Wed Jan 3	5:30– 6 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour (Linda Goldberg)
	6-7:30 pm	AAUW BOARD Meeting (Linda Goldberg)
Mon Jan 8	6:30- 9:30 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP Cheryl Markman)
Tue Jan 9	10-11 am	Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	10-11:30 am	Book Discussion AM The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne (Sandy Bonnet)
Wed Jan 10	11 am-1 pm	Art Appreciation (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
	7-8:30 pm	Wednesday Night Book Group Hybrid (Renee Sommerfeld)
Thu Jan 11	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
	1-4 pm	Bridge 2 nd Thursday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
Fri Jan 12	9:30 am-2 pm	Duplicate Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Jan 13	6:30-9:30 pm	Couples Dining (RSVP Karen Hook)
Mon Jan 15	9:30-11 am	Exploring World Literature Hybrid (RSVP Diana Taylor)
	1-4 pm	Interbranch Council (Linda Goldberg)
	6:30-9 pm	International Gourmet (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
Tue Jan 16	10-11 am	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	6-7:30 pm	Membership Meeting (Membership@aauwsanjose.org)
Wed Jan 17	1:30-3 pm	Program Event Planning Zoom (RSVP Ruth Dusan)
	7-8:30 pm	Public Policy (Susan Karlins)
Thu Jan 18	10 am-12 pm	Family History Hybrid (Susan Brundage)
	7-8:30 pm	Mystery Lovers ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Fri Jan 19	10 am-1 pm	Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Jan 20	1-3 pm	January Program Event League of Women Voters Wesley Room Newport & Minnesota (RSVP Ruth Dusan)
Mon Jan 22	9:30-11 am	Building and Properties Committee (buildings@aauwsanjose.org)
Tue Jan 23	1-4 pm	Bridge 4 th Tuesday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
	7-8:30 pm	Great Decisions PM ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Wed Jan 24	12-1:30 pm	Lunch Bunch (Diana Taylor)
Thu Jan 25	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
Fri Jan 26	1:30-3 pm	Local Scholarship Hybrid (Tynka Dees)
Sat Jan 27	10 am- 12 pm	Prospective Members and Member Meeting Coffee and Conversation (Membership@aauwsanjose.org)

San Jose Branch BONFIRE

Published monthly except for July by AAUW

San Jose Branch, 1165 Minnesota Avenue,
San Jose, CA 95125-3324

President: Linda Goldberg

BONFIRE Editor: Sonia Wright

Editorial Staff: Elin Bolt, Copy Editor; Tynka

Dees, Calendar Editor; Jan Giroux, Proofreader;

Barb Purdy, Layout Editor

Distribution: Sonia Wright & 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 membership. Only articles and announcements related to Branch business will be considered.

San Jose Branch

1165 Minnesota Ave., Suite 100

San Jose, CA 95125-3324

Phone: 408 294 2430

Email: www.aauwsanjose.org

January 2024

AAUW BONFIRE San Jose Branch *Established 1909*

SAVE THE DATE

February Program Event

Best-Selling Author and Historian Eleanor Herman

Saturday, February 17, 2024, 12 to 2 pm - ONLINE ONLY

Ruth Dusan, Program Vice President

In our mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research, we present to you Eleanor Herman, the New York Times best-selling author of several non-fiction works on the lives of European royals through the centuries, including the "Mistress of the Vatican," the biography of a woman who ran the Catholic Church in the 17th Century. Her latest book is "Off with Her Head." She has appeared on the National Geographic Channel, the History Channel, and the American Heroes Channel to comment about historical matters. Herman offers a rare combination of skills for a historian – her research is intensely scholarly, yet she writes the story in a colorful, witty manner. "History is so fascinating that it never has to be presented in a boring way," she explains. "...Sometimes people ask me if I plan to write novels. And I say, with all the things that really happened, who needs to make stuff up?"

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88037842305?pwd=xOZawsCDG0jnitH9aamDZdGebdffEd.1>

Meeting ID: 880 3784 2305

Passcode: 282798



Empowering Women Since 1881

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