

February Program Event - Bestselling Author and Historian Eleanor Herman
Saturday, February 17, 12 pm 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. Eleanor Herman is the New York Times bestselling 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?"

To join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 880 3784 2305
Passcode: 282798



Warm Hearts Drive a Great Success

Mary Jane Vitkovich, Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Thanks to all who contributed to our January Warm Hearts Drive. A carload of warm clothes was delivered to Santa Maria Urban Ministry. Your continued generosity helps keep our neighbors warm this winter.

Looking for another opportunity to donate items? Here it is ... we will be collecting feminine hygiene items for Sacred Heart Community Service and gently used bath/hand towels for Front Door Communities. Bins will be available at Headquarters beginning in February, or items may be brought to our parking lot drive on Saturday, March 9, from 10 am - 12 pm. Questions: contact [Mary Jane](#).



President's Corner by Linda Goldberg

As you may have read in your emails, we have now passed 100 years since the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in Congress. In 1923, it stated:

"Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdictions." In 1943, it was amended and now reads: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." When first introduced, it met opposition from reformers who had worked for protective labor laws and were afraid that the ERA would wipe out progress they had made. In the early 1940's, both the Republican and Democratic parties added support of the Amendment to their political platforms, but the Labor Movement was still committed to protective workplace laws, and social conservatives considered equal rights for women a threat to the existing power. It was reintroduced in Congress in 1982 and has been before every session of Congress since then - and yet, here we are. We are the only modern democracy that does not include sex equality in its constitution. AAUW recently joined the ERA Coalition to again advocate for passage of the Amendment. It seems like it has been long enough!

February is also Black History Month. Do you know why? Dr. Charles Woodson chose first a week, then later the month, partly because of the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Frederick Douglass (February 14). The Black community had been celebrating Douglass' birthday, as well as Lincoln's since his assassination. Woodson built on these pre-existing celebrations and asked the public to extend their study of Black history during that time. Perhaps this is a good month to seek out a Black woman who has changed history for all of us - there are many to choose from.

Of course, it is also "heart" month, so I wish you all a heart full of courage, compassion and cheerfulness, ready to take on the challenges ahead.

Save the Date

History San José/Portraits of the Past

March 16, 1 to 2 pm

Pam Dougherty

A fashion show taking us back through time will be presented by History San José/Portraits of the Past. The event will be at the Willow Glen Methodist Church across from Headquarters. There is parking and easy access for this fun event in honor of Women's History Month. For planning, please click here:

[Invitation-RSVP](#).

A Few Seats Are Left!
Mindfulness as a Key to Stress Management
Free Online Class: Thursdays, March 7 - May 2
9:30 am - 12 pm on Zoom



Kelly Weisberg
Certified Mindfulness Instructor

Stress is everywhere in our modern lives. We often feel overwhelmed by work, family, relationships, and social unrest. Stress leads us to feel anxious and depressed. It contributes to sleeplessness and loss of appetite or overeating. While we can't control what happens around us, we can control how we respond to stress.

Mindfulness teaches us techniques for stress management. Mindfulness is the practice of focusing on moment-to-moment experience without self-criticism and with acceptance. Mindfulness helps us mobilize our inner resources to meet the challenges of everyday life.

I will be offering a *free online* mindfulness class to members of AAUW. I am a certified mindfulness instructor and a lawyer/sociologist who has taught law and human behavior classes for 40 years. Years of stress from teaching, writing, and family responsibilities led me to take stress management classes and later to teach them. The upcoming class will focus on Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, the gold standard in mindfulness classes. This program, started by Jon Kabat-Zinn, rests on scientific evidence that supports its beneficial effects on health and well-being.

The class meets online for 2-1/2 hours once per week for 8 weeks, plus a day-long online silent retreat. Participants are guided through formal mindfulness practices, small group discussion and talks, and practices/exercises related to that week's topics. Minimum number of participants: 10 people. Maximum number: 20 people.

The class will be a fundraiser for AAUW. Participants are encouraged to give a donation to the AAUW branch of their choice. Continuing education credits (27) will be available for nurses and mental health professionals. For further information and to register, contact Kelly Weisberg at kelly_weisberg@yahoo.com.

"Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception."

- Ruth Bader Ginsburg



Exciting News from Tech Trek – But We Need Your Help

Cheryl Markman, Tech Trek

AAUW CA has announced that two new campuses will be added near San Jose for Tech Trek in 2024. One will be at Santa Clara University (SCU), the other will be at Cal State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB). Our Branch has requested to send 10 girls to camp at SCU. If there isn't enough space there, some of our girls would attend camp at CSUMB. Allocations are yet to be determined and our numbers may be cut. AAUW CA is counting on all branches that want to send campers to SCU and CSUMB to help staff the camps, and they may consider allocating space at a camp based upon the branch's ability to supply staff.

That being said, **what we need now are people to help staff the camps.** We are most in need of a co-director, leads on possible core class teachers (typically these are current or former middle or high school STEM subject teachers), an organizer/coordinator for field trips, an organizer/coordinator for Professional Women's Night, a coordinator for the Mad City Money workshop, and a Chief Shopper. The camp also needs about four more dorm moms. All camp staff must be female, and all but the teachers must be AAUW members. Please give some thought to how you might be able to help. Even if you can't assist on campus, perhaps you know someone who is a good fit for one of the camp positions that needs to be filled.

The dates of the camps are:

Santa Clara University - July 7 - 13

CSU Monterey Bay - July 14 - 20

Anyone interested in helping to fill one of these important positions should contact techtrek@aauwsanjose.org for a job description or more information. Please help our young women to further their interest in STEM and to advance their future in related careers.



Gifts for Teens, Toys for Kids

Elaine Benoit, Gifts for Teens

Branch elves enjoyed handing out sought after toys and popular Gifts for Teens bags to needy clients of Sacred Heart Community Service on December 21 during the annual holiday toy and gift giveaway. It was heartwarming to help excited parents select two toys for each of their younger children and teenagers. Enthusiastic Branch members (elves) helped distribute gifts and bikes, including Sharon Bouska, Beverly Bassett, Cheryl Markman (pictured in holiday attire with Santa antlers), Elaine Benoit and Kathy Myers. Over 400 Gifts for Teens duffel bags, stuffed full with 45 teen loved items, were donated to Sacred Heart C.S. for their holiday ToyBox drive.



Kathy Myers



Beverly Bassett



Cheryl Markham



Elaine Benoit





Thank you...

for making

AAUW San Jose's Holiday Scholarship
Fundraising Drive a success!

\$35,000 **additional** funds will support
deserving and determined women
finishing their 4-year degrees--because of
our community's generous hearts.

Thank you, AAUW members and supporters! Local Scholarship wishes to congratulate the following December fundraiser drawing winners:

Joseph George Wine Basket: Michelle Unger

Interest Group Wreaths: Pilar Pablo

BC Football items: Tom Tromblee

Jewelry from Sonia and Scarves from Nance: Judy Blegen and Susan Karlins

IPAD: Margaret Bard

Santa Cruz Get Away: Mary Jane Vitkovich

Sea Ranch Get Away: Mark Beckman.

What Can One Person Do?

Susan Karlins, Public Policy/Advocacy Committee

Do you want to make a difference in the direction our country is heading? Here are some Public Policy/Advocacy actions you can take to make a difference:

Write postcards to encourage Black residents of Georgia to participate in their May Congressional primary. Last year, our Branch wrote 2000 postcards to voters! Voters who participate in primary elections are more likely to vote in the November General Election. We'll be distributing postcard packets in the last week of February for you to mail them the first week of May. If you'd like to participate, contact Susan at publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org.

Visit your local School Board Meeting to lend support and find out if book banning is on the agenda. To learn more, sign up for the Public Policy/Advocacy email list at publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org.

Talk to your State Senator or Assemblymember about California legislation that promotes AAUW goals and values during AAUW California's Lobby Days on April 2 and 3. AAUW CA provides all the materials you need to participate in a meeting. If you're interested, go to https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdmZp_7Rwpc1lwHv4mF1hpX94i8uSruZfEc8uBsAWRLRsA5LQ/viewform.

New Title IX Guidance will be released this Spring. To learn more about it to share with Title IX Coordinators, contact publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org.

To find out more about these and other projects, join in our Public Policy/Advocacy Committee Zoom meetings on Wednesday, February 21 or March 20 at 7 pm. Join: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87531558423?pwd=Z0t4dTEvMTBsN00rYnBaSWZTbzIeZz09>

Women's Leadership and Policy Summit

Peg Carlson-Bowen, Membership

Join us for a day filled with excitement, insightful discussions, and opportunities to connect with like-minded individuals. This year's theme, "Unity in Diversity: Women Leading Change" promises to have engaging sessions, esteemed speakers, and valuable networking opportunities. [*See information on the back page.*]

Spotlight on Lois Robertson

Ruth Dusan and Grace O'Leary



How did you discover AAUW San Jose?

I originally discovered AAUW in 1958 after I graduated from college. I was raised in Willow Glen and graduated from San Jose State University so I felt at home. Then I rediscovered it in the 1980's for more participation in various groups.

How long have you been a member of AAUW?

I have been a member of AAUW for 35+ years.

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

I have always enjoyed meeting and talking with other college-educated women and joining some of the Interest Groups like Gourmet Dinners, Stock Investing, and Bridge. All these activities have allowed me to network and socialize with a lot of different people over the years.

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

I think that as an organization, we do a good job of focusing on our mission and remaining relevant to current societal issues. The combination of study and action allows members to focus on what motivates them to be involved. Helping new members feel involved and appreciated is important. Perhaps it should be a task that is formalized and organized.

What would you like members to know about you?

I have always had a positive outlook on life. Even though I was never really interested in being a leader, at times I have always been an active and energetic participant in whatever has come my way - whether it be my college studies, teaching, being 4-H leader, or fly fishing with my husband.

How would you like to be remembered?

A tough question to answer, but I would like to think I had a positive impact in the lives of my speech therapy students, my family members, and other lives I've helped to guide along the way.

February 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.**

Sun Feb	4 9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Feb	5 10 am-1 pm	Bridge 1 st Monday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
	6:30-8 pm	Neighbors Helping Neighbors (Bobbie Baker)
Tue Feb 6	10-11 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	1-4 PM	Time To Be Determined Film Fans (RSVP Nancy Wheeler)
Wed Feb 7	5:30- 6 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour (Linda Goldberg)
	6-7:30 pm	AAUW BOARD Meeting (Linda Goldberg)
Thu Feb 8	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
	1-4 pm	Bridge 2 nd Thursday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
Fri Feb 9	9:30 am-2 pm	Duplicate Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Feb 10	6:30-9:30 pm	Couples Dining (RSVP Karen Hook)
Sun Feb 11	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Feb 12	6:30- 9:30 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP Cheryl Markman)
Tue Feb 13	10-11 am	Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	10-11:30 am	Book Discussion AM All The Broken Places by John Boyne (Sandy Bonnet)
Wed Feb 14	11 am-1 pm	Art Appreciation (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
	7-8:30 pm	Wednesday Night Book Group Hybrid (Renee Sommerfeld)
Thu Feb 15	10 am-12 pm	Family History Hybrid (Susan Brundage)
	7-8:30 pm	Mystery Lovers ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Fri Feb 16	10 am-1 pm	Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Feb 17	12-2 pm	February Program Speaker ZOOM only Eleanor Herman (RSVP Ruth Dusan)
Sun Feb 18	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Feb 19	9:30-11am	Exploring World Literature Hybrid (RSVP Diana Taylor)
	6:30-9 pm	International Gourmet (RSVP Feb Bartolotta)
Tue Feb 20	10-11 am	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	6-7:30 pm	Membership Meeting (Membership@aauwsanjose.org)
Wed Feb 21	1:30-3 pm	Program Event Planning Zoom (RSVP Ruth Dusan)
	7-8:30 pm	Public Policy (Susan Karlins)
Thu Feb 22	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
Fri Feb 23	1:30-3 pm	Local Scholarship Hybrid (Tynka Dees)
Sat Feb 24	10 am-12 pm	Prospective Members and Member Meeting Coffee and Conversation (Membership@aauwsanjose.org)
Sun Feb 25	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Feb 26	11 am-12:30 pm	Building and Properties Committee (buildings@aauwsanjose.org)
Tue Feb 27	1-4 pm	Bridge 4 th Tuesday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
	7-8:30 pm	Great Decisions PM ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Wed Feb 28	12-1:30 pm	Lunch Bunch (Diana Taylor)

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: Renee Sommerfeld

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

February 2024

AAUW BONFIRE San Jose Branch *Established 1909*

ly.vo@bos.sccgov.org' and logos for 'CINDY CHAVEZ SUPERVISOR DISTRICT 7' and 'VHF VALLEY HEALTH FOUNDATION'."/>

Save the Date
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND POLICY SUMMIT 2024

Saturday, March 23, 2024
Unity in Diversity: Women Leading Change

Join us for a day of unity, inspiration, and empowerment
as women lead the way in shaping policy and driving positive change.

For more information, please contact ly.vo@bos.sccgov.org

Event Details:
March 23, 2024
San Jose State University
1 Washington Square,
San Jose, CA 95112
9 AM – 4 PM

Stay tuned for more information and formal invitations, including details about our distinguished speakers, thought-provoking workshops, and how you can actively participate. RSVP link to follow.

We look forward to your presence at this transformative event as we come together to celebrate the power of women in leadership.

AAUW San Jose will also be hosting a table to spread the word about our great organization.



Empowering Women Since 1881

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