



President's Corner by Linda Goldberg

April is here and that means it is time for our Branch's Annual Meeting. This is arguably the most important meeting of the year for you to attend. You will be voting on the officers who will lead the Branch for fiscal year 2024-25. We are so fortunate to have an AAUW Fellowship recipient coming to speak with us. Please check out the article elsewhere in this issue to learn more about Carolyn Zola.

Beginning this month, we have the opportunity to vote to change the bylaws of AAUW to better reflect the changes in society and meet the new challenges that we face as an organization dedicated to equality and education for women and girls. It may seem like a major shift, but since its inception in 1881, AAUW has been willing to look carefully at itself and change to better reflect its mission. Among other things, we have changed the degree requirements from advanced degrees in only a few approved subjects to include bachelor's degrees in any subject, then adding associate degrees and including men as members. Like all the other changes, this one will serve to strengthen our membership and our commitment to the mission. Please know that welcoming those without a degree will not change who we are and what we are working toward, nor will the name of the organization change. At the March Board meeting, your Board of Directors voted to support this bylaw change. See pertinent information regarding the bylaws voting below.

Key Dates for the 2024 Vote

AAUW is utilizing *SimplyVoting.com*, an independent, third-party voting system for this year's vote.

April 3 | Voting opens. Look for your encrypted ballot email from Simply Voting, **Check your spam folder.**

May 15 | Online voting ends at 12 noon ET and results will be announced online.

All members without an email address on file or who have unsubscribed from AAUW National emails will receive a paper ballot by mail.

AAUW San Jose Annual Meeting

April 13, 10 am to noon at AAUW San Jose Headquarters

Linda Goldberg, President

Please join us on Saturday, April 13, 10 am to noon, at our Annual Meeting. We will vote for your Board of Directors for next year, with Installation of Officers guided by Sharon Bouska. The food will take you for a short (virtual) trip to New York with cheesecake, bagels and all the trimmings.

Our speaker will be AAUW Fellowship recipient Carolyn Zola. Carolyn is a PhD candidate in History at Stanford University, where she studies gender, race, and labor in eighteenth and nineteenth century North America. Her dissertation, "Public Women: Urban Provisioners in Nineteenth Century America," focuses on women who sold food in northeastern port cities between the mid-18th and mid-19th Centuries, to offer a radical rethinking of the seemingly familiar story of American economic and urban transformation. A careful study of these women reveals a potent new narrative about the centrality of women's commercial activities during the rise of American capitalism.

A recipient of Stanford University's Centennial Teaching Assistant Award, Carolyn Zola has received research support from the American Association of University Women, the Library Company of Philadelphia Program in Early American Economy and Society, the Michelle R. Clayman Institute for Gender Research, and the Stanford Humanities Center. Born and raised in the Bay Area, before pursuing her PhD at Stanford she worked in theater, studied at City College of San Francisco, and earned her bachelor's degree in history at UC Berkeley.



2024 ANNUAL AAUW

MEMBER MEETING

CAROLYN ZOLA
Stanford History PhD Candidate
AAUW Scholarship Winner

SAT., APRIL 13 | 10AM - 12PM
HQ | 1165 MINNESOTA AVE

- Learn more about women in the U.S. in 18th/19th Century
- Enjoy a delicious array of gourmet treats
- Vote & install next year's officers

AAUW
San Jose Inc. (CA) Branch

Nominating Committee Report

Sonia Wright

As required by the Branch Bylaws, the Nominating Committee submits the following elected officers for election at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 13, 10 am to noon:

President: Tynka Dees

President-Elect: (still vacant)

Program VP: Ruth Dusan

Treasurer: Paul Bowen

Finance Officer: Katherine Oven

Membership VP: Margaret Bard and Bobbie Baker continue their second year

Membership VP: Sue Ann Snow and Julia Howlett start their first year

AAUW Funds: Mary Jane Vitkovich

Secretary: Judy Blegen

Buildings & Properties (3 positions): Doris Ebert, Linda Snashall, and Jan Bartolotta

I want to thank my incredible team of Diane Trombetta, Bobbie Baker and Wendy Foote for all the phone calls and emails. Diane got caught up with a lot of people!

Non-elected positions to be confirmed by the President:

Immediate Past President: Linda Goldberg

Membership Treasurer: Renee Sommerfeld

Communication Coordinator: To be filled once we have a job description

Gifts for Teens Chair: Elaine Benoit

Local Scholarship Co-chairs: Erika Engebretson and Beth Redmond

College/University Relations Board Rep: open

Neighbors Helping Neighbors Co-Chairs: Mary Jane Vitkovich and Bobbie Baker

Tech Trek Co-Chairs: Anne Wustrow and open

Public Policy Committee Chair: Susan Karlins

Interest Group Coordinator: Elaine Petersen

Parliamentarian: Linda Goldberg

Office Manager: Judy Burt

BONFIRE Editor: Sonia Wright

BONFIRE staff: Elin Bolt, Barb Purdy, Jan Giroux, Tynka Dees, Claire Campodonico, Ruth Dusan, Cheryl Markman, Nancy Wheeler

BONFIRE/Membership address changes: Renee Sommerfeld

BONFIRE Distribution: Nancy Wheeler and Linda Guyer

Web Administrator: Peg Carlson-Bowen

Shutterfly Moderator: Elin Bolt

Email Manager: Elizabeth Guimarin

Directory Editor: Nell Aiello

Sunshine Chair: Claire Campodonico

Policies & Procedures Chair: open

InterBranch Special Project Foundation Rep: Margaret Bard

InterBranch Council Rep: Linda Goldberg

Public Policy Update

Susan Karlins, Public Policy Advocate

Forty-two members and friends are writing 1,645 postcards to potential primary election voters in Georgia and Virginia, including one of our AAUW Scholars who is writing with her classmates in the group UCLA Latinxs/Chicanxs for Community Medicine. In February and March, we attended School Board meetings in the Cambrian, San Jose Unified, and Santa Clara Unified School Districts. Wendy Foote, Jean Meyer, Peg Carlson-Bowen and Susan Karlins spoke as former parents in these districts, while the rest of us provided support in our AAUW San Jose t-shirts! Teachers and a Board member at one of the districts gave us hugs and asked us to come back for every meeting. This is a district where Moms for Liberty regularly provide public comment that is distressing to many meeting attendees. If you're interested in speaking (guidance for the two-minute public comment will be provided) at your own District Board meeting, contact publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org.

In early April, Peg Carlson-Bowen, Vicki Ratner, Candace Roney, and Shelley Powers are planning to participate in AAUW CA's Lobby Days, advocating for AAUW CA priority bills to our Assemblymembers and State Senators. At our March 20 and April 17 Public Policy meetings, we will be introducing our One Person/One Bill project to further support AAUW CA's state legislative efforts. Sometime in April, we'll be having a training session for interested participants as well. Ashley Dargert continues to represent us at AAUW CA Public Policy and will lead One Person/One Bill with Elaine Peterson.

Also in April, we'll be collaborating with the Santa Clara County Office of Education to provide voter registration for 16- and 17-year-old students who will then be able to vote when they turn 18. Join us at a meeting to learn more! An orientation session for new participants is offered at 6:30, prior to our 7 pm meetings.



“I can promise you that women working together—linked, informed and educated—can bring peace and prosperity to this forsaken planet.

ISABEL ALLENDE



Another Successful Parking Lot Drive

Bobbie Baker, Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Neighbors Helping Neighbors thanks everyone who donated to our successful parking lot drive on March 9 for Front Door Communities and Sacred Heart Community Service. A carload of feminine hygiene and incontinence supplies were delivered to Sacred Heart, and several bags of towels were brought to Front Door. Thanks for your generosity!

Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Members L-R Sarah Janigian,
Erin Barrite, and Judy Burt



welcome

Welcome to Our Newest Members

Claire Campodonico

MAYA SMESTAD is a student at UC Santa Barbara, where she is an officer in her sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta. She is studying Journalism and pursuing a degree in Pre-Communication. Maya is looking forward to furthering her social, intellectual, and moral growth through her membership in AAUW. Maya was referred by her mother, Branch member Leticia Cowan.

EMILY GOODHEART earned a BA in German Literature from SJSU. She minored in English and Theatre Arts and also received a certificate in Language Development. Most of her career was spent teaching English to English Learners at Los Altos High School. After years of taking care of family, Emily now has the time to pursue her various interests and joined AAUW. She was referred by Branch member Mary Barry.

MICHELLE WEXLER, a Gilroy resident, was referred by Branch member Susan Karlins. Michelle earned her degrees from the University of Wisconsin: a BA in Sociology and Environmental Studies, as well as an MA in Geography. Michelle is employed by Santa Clara County Public Health as a Program Manager for Active and Safe Communications. Her work focus is promoting walking and biking in our county.

TEJESWI PRATIMA DODDA earned a BA in Journalism and an MA in Communications from the University of Hartford in Connecticut. She is employed as a Domestic Violence Case Manager by MAITRI, a free, confidential, non-profit organization based in the SF Bay Area that primarily helps families and individuals from South Asia who are facing domestic, emotional and cultural conflict. In 2008-2009, she received an AAUW International Fellowship.



SAVE THE DATE

Filipino Heritage and Culture Currents Program

May 18 - 1 pm to 3 pm

Willow Glen United Methodist Church - Wesley Room

1420 Newport Avenue, San Jose

Come and join us for the celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander month! Come early at 12:45 pm to sign up, mingle, and sample Filipino delicacies.

Program Title: Inspiring Filipino and Filipino-American Women, including Maria Ressa, first Filipino to win the Nobel Peace Prize (2021)

Presenter: Edna Robison, Past President (2016-2017, 2011-2012), AAUW San Jose Branch

Opening and Closing Remarks: Ruth Dusan, Program VP

Special Guests: Ukooladies

February Program Replay

Bestselling Author and Historian Eleanor Herman



Did you miss this online program? You can watch the replay:

<https://youtu.be/QPevYqEPKew>. Eleanor Herman's latest book is "Off with Her Head,"

exploring the history of misogyny against women with power, from Cleopatra to Kamala Harris. She is a 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. She has appeared on the National Geographic Channel, the History Channel, and the American Heroes Channel. Herman offers a rare combination of skills for a historian – her research is intensely scholarly, yet she writes in an engaging, witty manner. "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?"



Gratitude and Appreciation for AAUW San Jose Program Planning Team

Ruth Dusan, Program VP/Program Planning Team

Dear AAUW San Jose Members: First, I want you to know that I was given the choice by our Branch President to form an official Program Development Committee, but I chose to follow the example of our previous Program VP, Bobbie Baker, and create an ad hoc program planning team of collaborators. This is a team of enthusiastic volunteers who present their ideas for a program and then make it happen. I want to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the many volunteers who have helped bring programs to our community. Your support and dedication to our mission are truly inspiring and encouraging. The level of collaboration, trust, and mutual respect exhibited is truly remarkable.

On behalf of AAUW San Jose, I would like to acknowledge those who joined our team to organize or sponsor the events presented so far and for upcoming events:

Nell Aiello, Marie Arnold, Bobbie Baker, Margaret Bard, Elaine Benoit, Risë Berry, Sharon Bouska, Jean Boyden, Judy Burt, Karelle Cornwell, Tynka Dees, Pamela Dougherty, Wendy Foote, Linda Goldberg, Linda Guyer, Barbara Handly, Susan Karlins, Monique Lee, Cheryl Markman, Barb Purdy, Vicki Ratner, Edna Robison, Sharon Shephard, Santha Shanmugam, Linda Snashall, Barbara Snyder, Diane Trombetta, Kelly Weisberg, Nancy Wheeler, Sonia Wright, Anne Wustrow, the Membership Committee, the BONFIRE team, the Communications/Social Media team, and everyone interested in collaborating and empowering members to move our mission forward.

We would like to thank other members who have provided support, as well as those who have contributed and/or chose to support our program planning efforts through RSVPs and other means. To recap our recent and upcoming programs, on March 16 we presented "Portraits of the Past/History San Jose" (see <https://www.portraitsofthepast.org/>), which was sponsored by our longtime member Pamela Dougherty. Next up, our April 13 program event will be the Branch Annual Meeting with a guest speaker. We are currently planning an event on May 18, sponsored by Edna Robison, in celebration of Filipino Heritage Month (see the Save the Date announcement in this issue). In early June, NHN will have their annual soirée (details to follow). Then, later in June, our planning team will gather to reflect, to celebrate, and to pass the baton on to the next team. I have accepted the nomination to continue as the Program VP for 2024-2025 and look forward to more opportunities to experience continuous learning and growth to help accomplish our AAUW mission and shared goals.





Spotlight on Marcy Keeler

Ruth Dusan and Grace O’Leary

Jan Bartolotta and Grace O’Leary interviewed Marcy for this article. Jan also took the picture of Marcy Keeler. We thank you both for your contributions and participation in this production.

How did you discover AAUW San Jose?

In the 1980's, I was working for Lockheed. Lockheed had information days, occasionally, to encourage employees to learn more about activities in our community. I went over to the table with AAUW information on it and joined. My aunt was a member, and I knew she would be pleased.

How long have you been a member of AAUW?

About 35 years, since about 1985, I think. I was commuting from Concord. My first group was International Gourmet. I have attended the dinners and have always found opportunities to enjoy social time with other members all the years since.

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

The people make this a fantastic organization. I have met so many interesting women, you do what you can, and don't get pressured to do anything else. I recently served on the Building & Properties Committee and learned some things about maintenance and renovation. Interesting!

Is there anything else we can do to improve membership experience? I've wondered if we have active connections to the colleges and universities near us. Could we emphasize our mission and programs in general when we are on campus?

What would you like members to know about you?

I spent part of World War II sitting on the lap of General Douglas MacArthur in the Philippines. My mother says that he loved the relaxation when he was among the military families. Unfortunately, my father did not survive the war, but my family did manage to return to family in Colorado. I was able to start my young life as a lover of dogs — any kind and any shape.

How would you like to be remembered?

I like people and I am extremely impressed by what AAUW people are doing. I'm always impressed by any AAUW program that I attend. I like to support our groups like NHN, and everything I can do to support makes me happy! I would like to be remembered as someone who supported our Interest Groups and to know it made me happy to be involved in good works. It's true that I am not able to go into a bookstore and leave without buying a book — probably a cookbook. I spent my later working years as a teacher for Special Needs Students. I hope I have learned more about kindness.

From the BONFIRE Newsletter team: We apologize to Lois Robinson for misspelling her last name in the January Spotlight article—stupid autocorrect!

April 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 Apr 1	10 am-1 pm	Bridge 1 st Monday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
	6:30-8 pm	Neighbors Helping Neighbors (Bobbie Baker)
Tue Apr 2	10-11 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	1-4 pm	Film Fans Time to Be Determined (RSVP Nancy Wheeler)
	1-3 pm	Mahjong (RSVP Shelley Powers)
Wed Apr 3	5:30- 6 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour (Linda Goldberg)
	6-7:30 pm	AAUW BOARD Meeting (Linda Goldberg)
Sun Apr 7	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Apr 8	6:30- 9:30 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP Cheryl Markman)
Tue Apr 9	10-11 am	Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	10-11:30 am	Book Discussion AM Year of Wonders by Geraldine Brooks (Sandy Bonnet)
	1-3 pm	Mahjong (RSVP Shelley Powers)
Wed Apr 10	11 am-1 pm	Art Appreciation (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
	7-8:30 pm	Wednesday Night Book Group Hybrid (Renee Sommerfeld)
Thu Apr 11	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
	1-4 pm	Bridge 2 nd Thursday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
Fri Apr 12	9:30 am-2 pm	Duplicate Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Apr 13	10 am-Noon	Annual Meeting (Linda Goldberg)
	6:30-9:30 pm	Couples Dining (RSVP Karen Hook)
Sun Apr 14	10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Apr 15	9:30-11am	Exploring World Literature Catherine the Great Hybrid (RSVP Diana Taylor)
	6:30-9 pm	International Gourmet (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
Tue Apr 16	Noon-1pm	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	1-3 pm	Mahjong (RSVP Shelley Powers)
	6-7:30 pm	Membership Meeting (Membership@aauwsanjose.org)
Wed Apr 17	1:30-3 pm	Program Event Planning Zoom (RSVP Ruth Dusan)
	7-8:30 pm	Public Policy (Susan Karlins)
Thu Apr 18	10 am-12 pm	Family History Hybrid (Susan Brundage)
	7-8:30 pm	Mystery Lovers ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Fri Apr 19	10 am-1 pm	Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Apr 20	10 am- 12 pm	Prospective Members and Member Meeting Coffee and Conversation (Membership@anjose.org)
Sun Apr 21	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Apr 22	11 am-12:30 pm	Building and Properties Committee (buildings@aauwsanjose.org)
Tue Apr 23	10-11 am	Italian Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
	1-3 pm	Mahjong (RSVP Shelley Powers)
	1-4 pm	Bridge 4 th Tuesday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
	7-8:30 pm	Great Decisions PM ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)
Wed Apr 24	12-1:30 pm	Lunch Bunch (Diana Taylor)
Thu Apr 25	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
Fri Apr 26	1:30-3 pm	Local Scholarship Hybrid (Tynka Dees)
Sat Apr 27	9-Noon	State Annual Meeting 2024 AAUW Annual Event - Back To School! - AAUW California
Sun Apr 28	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP Judy Burt)
Tue Apr 30	1-3 pm	Mahjong (RSVP Shelley Powers)

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
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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.

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April 2024

AAUW BONFIRE San Jose Branch *Established 1909*



2024 AAUW CA Annual Event – Back To School!

Find out what's happening in the hallways of AAUW California. Join the state leadership team for a campus tour, classroom visits, rah-rah assemblies, and awards to star pupils. Learn what AAUW California is doing for your branch. View the winning Speech Trek and Gov Trek videos. Learn who was awarded Branch Activity of the Year and State Named Gift Honoree. Then choose an elective for extra study in breakout rooms. Warning: there may be pop quizzes! Pack a snack and meet us in the principal's office.

EVENT DETAILS

Date: Saturday, April 27

Time: 9 am – 12 pm

Registration is required:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0qdu6pqDgsGt0NQRHnsPKu7BnhJCb71Yk0#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?meeting=us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0qdu6pqDgsGt0NQRHnsPKu7BnhJCb71Yk0#/registration)

The recording will be posted on the AAUW California website for those who are unable to attend.



Empowering Women Since 1881

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