

THE VIEW FROM SAN RAMON

Volume 40, Number 4

December 2023

We're grateful for...



Happy Holidays!

See Page 4 for Program Information

AAUW MISSION AND DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

American Association of University Women advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 7:00 PM Game Night Lucy Weed
3	4	5 11:30 AM Lunch Bunch Margo James	6	7  Hanukkah	8	9 9:00 AM Local Walking Group Lois Kamoroff
10	11 1:00 PM Daytime Readers Margo James 7:00 PM Board Meeting via Zoom	12	13	14	15 7:30 PM Special Date Fourth Friday Flicks Chris White	16
17	18 7:00 PM Night Book Group Cheri Ng	19 7:00 PM Bridge Chris White	20 1:00 PM Women in History Margo James	21  Winter Solstice	22	23
24	25  Christmas	26  Kwanzaa	27	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve 						

Snippets

If you have a Snippet item (family events, career changes, etc.) that you would like to share with branch members, please contact Carol Lombardi.

Loranne and Tom Weir welcomed a grandson on 11/10/23.

Rebecca Said moved to Walnut Creek from El Cerrito and will be able to join more of our in-person events!

Save the Dates

January 18 Kristy Higaes Presents Girls Garage
February 5 Tech Trek fundraiser at Gianni's

Watch for more information about our 2024 events in future newsletters.

President's Pen

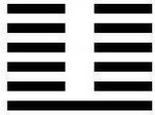


Has It Been a Year Already?

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.

Rabindranath Tagore

Winter Solstice (December 21, 2023; 7:27 PM) is the shortest day of the year. Following this day, the sunlight increases day by day. For thousands of years, many



cultures have honored this hopeful season. The Confucian calendar in China, for example, always manages to situate the Winter Solstice in month 11 of their twelve-month lunar cycle. Month 11 is represented by the I Ching

hexagram #2 Fu (Return), shown at left. We see the sun's return in the single unbroken, warm yang line at the bottom of the hexagram. It represents a rebirth and returning energy after a difficult time.

Each year brings every one of us gifts and losses. Several of you are celebrating the births of new grandchildren this year. Yay! I hope you have made new friends this year (I have!) or started new projects that will bring you much satisfaction. And we've all suffered losses, loved ones, jobs. I am sorry for yours. I lost my mother last spring, and it will be sad to celebrate the first Christmas without her. But Winter Solstice is the time to light a candle as a reminder that after darkness, light will be reborn. We will be comforted. After mourning, life's joy returns.

Shout out to the SIG leaders! Our very active Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are a source of joy for our branch members and if you aren't part of one, I suggest you give yourself a gift and join one (see page 10 for the list). Please recognize the service of our wonderful SIG leaders—the ones who have been leading groups for years and the ones who recently signed up: Sandra Budde, Andrée Chagnon, Diane Griffiths, Margo James, Lois

Kamoroff, Cheri Ng, Michelle Ritenour, Kathy Senti, Lucy Weed, and Chris White. Thank you for all the joy you have given us this year. We look forward to many adventures in 2024.

Find your favorite snackable on our website. Yes, we all eat a lot of cookies in December. Don't forget about our branch snackables of a different kind: Sweet, small, consumable volunteer service opportunities that will bring you and others joy can be found on our branch website ([here](#)). Remember that the members-only section of the website is password protected; you can find the password at the bottom of the membership directory. (And thanks to Margo James and our membership team who keep this invaluable resource up to date!)

May you and yours enjoy peace, health, happiness, and prosperity in the coming New Year.

Kathleen Schaub, President



Happy December Birthdays!

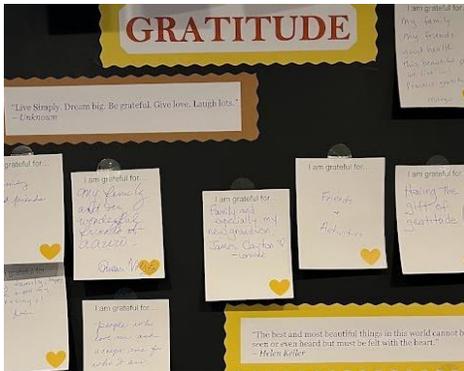
**Beth Allen
Marielle Boortz
Lois Kamoroff
Brenda Hill**

Program

Friendsgiving Is A Hit!

Many thanks to those who attended our first fun Friendsgiving event. We played two rousing rounds of Bingo, enjoyed a trivia game, caught up with friends far and near, and shared some tasty refreshments. We also celebrated a special birthday for Pauline Nolte, who traveled from her home in Vermont to spend the evening with her AAUW friends. To see all photos from the gathering, use this [link](#).

We hope you enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving with your family and friends.



Save the Date!
January 18, 2024
6:30 PM–8:30 PM
Kristy Higaes Presents
The Girls Garage

San Ramon Community Center
Terrace Room
In Person Only

Kristy Higaes from **Girls Garage** will share information about this organization and describe the great design projects their students have built.

Girls Garage, a nonprofit design and construction school in the Bay Area, is for girls and gender-expansive youth ages 9–18. Founded in 2013, Girls Garage is the first-ever design and building workshop for female, non-binary, trans, and gender-expansive youth in the United States.

Girls Garage provides free and low-cost programs in carpentry, welding, architecture, engineering, and activist art to a diverse community of 200 students per year. The programs equip youth with tools to build the world they want to see by integrating technical skills, college and career guidance, and community leadership.

Kristy is an educator, writer, and arts administrator who has worked for over 20 years serving schools and communities in Oakland. She is inspired by the intersection of arts, education, community, and impact.

Look for an Evite in January and please respond so we get an accurate count of people. Thanks!

Cindy Alpert & Karen Rice
Co-VPs Program



Tech Trek



It's Time to Think About Tech Trek 2024!

On October 26, we attended the kickoff meeting for Tech Trek Coordinators. Here's our takeaway:

Camp dates are still TBD yet likely will fall in a similar timeframe as previous years.

Costs of the Sonoma Camp will likely increase to \$1,300 per camper due to the rising costs of campus housing and maintenance. Our campers attend camp at Sonoma State, so we will plan for the cost increase when determining how many campers to send.

Virtual camp is still expected to be \$500 per camper.

The application process will start in January, so I will be contacting those who volunteered for Tech Trek committees last year to see if you would like to continue. New committee members are welcome—we already have a couple of new people who offered to help!

Save the date for our big fundraiser, held on Monday, **February 5, 2024** at **Gianni's Restaurant**. Please save the date to enjoy a tasty meal and catch up with friends. More details to come in January. Our CSUEB students have volunteered to help with waiting on tables, which will add to the fun. We may need more volunteers, so more to come on that.

And please consider donating to Tech Trek! The generous support of our members is much appreciated.

Cindy Alpert
Tech Trek Coordinator

Happy 5th AAUW Anniversaries!

Arla Barnes
Lynda Gann
Elaine Graves
MaryJane Keogh
Catherine Lewis

Patty Nobles
Beth Robertson
Rebecca Said
Kathy Senti
Robin White

Local Scholarship



Fundraising Update

The October and November auctions raised a total of \$518—that's half a scholarship! With the holidays almost upon us, Local Scholarship plans to take a break before offering our last gift card auction of this fiscal year in February 2024. We appreciate and look forward to your continuing support.

Our fundraising plans/opportunities for the 2023–2024 year also include the following, so please look for information in future newsletters:

- ❖ Annual Shredding Event on Saturday, April 27, 2024
- ❖ Trader Joe's gift basket drawing at the year-end celebration on Saturday, May 18, 2024
- ❖ Annual Alameda County Fair volunteer opportunity, June 2024
- ❖ One restaurant fundraiser, possibly in combination with a Lunch Bunch gathering
- ❖ Seeking grants from local businesses
- ❖ And of course, the current AAUW San Ramon Fall Giving Campaign, which benefits many of our local programs, including Local Scholarship

As in past years, Local Scholarship will again offer a Thank You Basket Drawing at the March program (date TBD). Any member, their family, or friends who make a monetary donation to Local Scholarship—no matter the size, either directly or through SPF—will be included in this drawing. Donations made beginning July 1, 2023 through the date of the March, 2024 drawing are eligible. ONE LUCKY DONOR'S name will be drawn, and they don't need to be present to win.

Local Scholarship deeply appreciates your support.

Loranne Weir, Co-VP Local Scholarship with
Susan Walker-Christensen

Membership



Membership Matters

New Member Spotlight



Helen Rozman was born and raised in Ontario, Canada. She and her husband, Stephen, have worked and lived in Canada, Belgium, and the greater Bay Area. They have a college-age daughter.

Helen completed her undergraduate degree in Art History at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. She has a certificate in Human Resources Management from Humber College in Toronto, Canada, and a Master of Arts in Teaching from the University of San Francisco. Helen also has a California Multiple Subject teaching credential.

Helen enjoys cooking, gardening, art, the movies, and seeing live performances in dance, opera and theater. She is an avid reader and is learning to play the piano again. Focused on fitness and good health, Helen walks, bikes, and swims. Her constant walking partner is her dog Max.

A memorable experience for Helen was, in her own words, “My first trip to Indonesia for my wedding. We spent a month there and it was a chance to practice my Bahasa Indonesia language skills and immerse myself fully into a new culture. I still remember those feelings of culture shock, awe, adventure, newness and exposure to new people, different ways of living and thinking and have revisited those feelings when I traveled to Russia, China, Japan and many European countries in later years. However, that wonder and interest can also happen very close to home for me, as I am now spending more time in San Ramon meeting people through the AAUW, the San Ramon Library Foundation, and Forest Home Farms Historic Home by volunteering in their programs.”

Branch Directory

The branch directory was sent to your email on November 12, 2023. It has lots of important information including your AAUW member ID. In addition, the footer has the **password** to access the Members-Only section of our branch website. You will need this password to find our branch “Snackables” (short-term volunteer opportunities), Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, and directory. The footer also includes the web addresses for AAUW National, AAUW California, and our very own San Ramon branch. **Please forward changes, additions, and errors by email to Margo James.**

Corresponding Secretary

Especially during this holiday season, it is nice to remember our AAUW friends. Please let us know if we can send a greeting card of support and or good cheer to any of our members.

We wish one and all a healthy, safe, and joyous holiday.

Your Membership Team:
Harvalee Grimm, Betsy Hoffmann, and Margo James

Gov Trek

Gov Trek Recruiting Adult Volunteers

The California AAUW Gov Trek program is recruiting students AND adult volunteers to help with the virtual program, which runs **Saturdays** from February 3 through March 16, 2024. The information session for this program will be held January 8, 2024 for anyone interested.. Registration **deadline** for adult volunteers is Jan 31, 2024.

The volunteers will function as Zoom breakout room facilitators for groups of 14 students. The adult is needed to help them stay on task, to assist with the understanding and implementation of assigned activities, and to facilitate collaboration among the group. The groups will be mostly self-directed, and student peers who participated last year will participate. There will be a training session for volunteers, and each volunteer must read and comply with the AAUW Bullying Prevention guidelines.

Statewide, the program will require 60 volunteers to staff each session (3 per room).

More detailed information can be found on the Gov Trek website:

AAUW CA: aauw-ca.org

AAUW CA Gov Trek: aauw-ca.org/gov-trek/

Rebecca “Becky” Said and Leela Gopal

Public Policy



Highlights from November's Public Policy California Newsletter

California Legislation

Since our last newsletter, the 2023 legislative session wrapped up with Governor Newsom signing several of our supported bills, including:

AB 1394. Signed into Law! Authored by Assemblymember Buffy Wicks and co-sponsored by AAUW California, this bill seeks to help child sex abuse survivors remove their images from social media platforms, holding big tech accountable for design features that knowingly, recklessly or negligently facilitate, aid or abet child exploitation.

AB 1078. Signed into Law! Authored by Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson, this bill expands the diversity of the social science curriculum, requiring instruction in social sciences to include a study of the role and contributions of people of all genders, Latino Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, and other ethnic cultural, religious and socioeconomic status groups. If the school district has not provided sufficient textbooks or instructional materials, their local control funding formula allocation will be reduced.

Kathi Harper, Chair, Public Policy School Board Project, published the following about the parameters of AB 1078:

On September 25, 2023, Governor Newsom signed AB 1078 into law, officially preventing school districts from banning books and censoring curriculum based on the materials' depiction of inclusive and diverse perspectives. Specifically, the new law:

Reaffirms, in the Introduction, that:

- California supports accurate and inclusive education
- The California Constitution guarantees pupils equal protection under the law
- California schools have an obligation to combat bias against pupils within their schools
- Accurate and inclusive education are essential to ensure the educational success of all pupils

The legislation:

- Requires the Department of Education to develop guidance and public educational materials to ensure that all Californians can access information about

educational laws and policies that safeguard the right to an accurate and inclusive curriculum

- Requires all school districts to have sufficient instructional materials for all students that align with approved content standards
- Adds to list of included topics in social sciences textbooks: the role and contributions of people of all genders, Latino Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, and members of other ethnic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic status groups
- Reduces a school district's funding formula allocation if the district does not provide sufficient instructional materials pursuant to these provisions
- Prohibits governing members of school districts from refusing to approve or prohibiting the use of any book or instructional material on the basis that it contains inclusive and diverse perspectives

It is not certain at this point how school districts will respond to the new law. We anticipate that most will comply, but suspect there are some that will not. Please note that the script in the School Board Project (SBP) ToolKit has been modified to reflect the new law.

Public Policy Newsletter

The AAUW California Public Policy Team's newsletter provides local branches with important tools to learn about current issues and facilitate member involvement and contributions to public policy initiatives. In the newsletter you will find upcoming events, legislative calls to action, and valuable resources. Note that you can sign up to receive Action Alerts about legislation of interest to you. Of particular importance to our branch members are the initiatives around education and gender equality. Check it out at this link: [AAUW-CA website](https://www.aauw-ca.org/)

Catherine Lewis, Public Policy



Thank you to all volunteer
editors and proofreaders

Judy Bracken, Cindy Ferrin, Cathy Nisen, Nancy Vandell, Lucy Weed, Chris White

Fund



See What Our California AAUW Fund Fellows Are Up To

Shared from the AAUW California Connection and the AAUW National Membership Matters

Sick of binge-watching crime dramas and dystopian science fiction series? Don't turn to *Lassie* reruns. Instead, be inspired by watching [videos](#) of our very own California AAUW Fund fellows and grant recipients discussing the innovative work our contributions helped sponsor. Trust us: these scholars can make subjects like vitamin B6, cross-body site microbiome ectopy, and E.coli as fascinating as the time Timmy and Lassie saved the farm from a grasshopper invasion (1960 S6.E20 - The Grasshopper and the Ant).

Interested in seeing the bios of all the amazing AAUW Fellows from all over? This year's cohort data has been uploaded into a [database](#) and you can now search the bios, institutions, and projects for our awardees.

Don't Forget the FUND Matching Donation Opportunity

Until the end of the year, your FUND donation will be doubled! Your contribution will help push Congress to finally pass the Paycheck Fairness Act and support family caregivers.



You can find information about all AAUW donation opportunities [here](#).



San Ramon Valley School District (SRVUSD) Update: Protecting High Quality Education

The San Ramon Valley Unified School District faces two reductions in available school funding in the next two years. These funding sources currently support core academic programs, small class sizes, and programs that help ensure students are prepared for college and careers.

The purpose of this article is to inform our members of this issue. No action is required. Our branch received an email from Rachel Hurd, Governing Board President for SRVUSD discussing the issue of school funding in this district. Note that this email was simply a notification so that the SRVUSD board could to solicit input from the community before taking action. Also, it aligns with the AAUW goal to champion equal access in education.

To address the loss in funding, the Board of Trustees of the SRVUSD is considering two measures for the 2024 ballot. The first would renew the expiring parcel tax funding at the current rate of \$144 per parcel per year. The second would address the loss of State funding at the rate of \$98 per parcel per year. Both proposed measures would retain a senior citizen exemption. All funds from these measures would benefit SRVUSD schools only. No funds could be taken by the State or used for other purposes.

SRVUSD is one of the highest performing school districts in the nation with more National Blue Ribbon schools this past year than any other district in the State of Nation. Loss of these funds would significantly impact the quality of education for our students.

The district has created a community information webpage with an [informational video](#) and other resources as a way to learn more: www.srvusd.net/HighQualityEd. The School Board seeks and values input from the community as they evaluate potential funding sources.



What in the Heck Is the IBC?

At various times, you may have noticed the acronym IBC mentioned in the newsletter or at one of our events. You may have wondered, what is that? (Or maybe you didn't, but I'm going to tell you anyway LOL). IBC stand for Interbranch Council. It is an informal group, not part of the official AAUW structure. Nationwide, some branches are part of IBCs and others not.

Our branch is one of nine AAUW branches in the Contra Costa County IBC. The other branches (in size order) are DAW/Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek (190), OML Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (126), Pleasant Hill-Martinez (90), Benicia-Vallejo (60), Clayton (31), Concord (25), WCC/West Contra Costa (33), and Delta (15). With 102 members San Ramon is the third largest branch in the group. Generally, the branch president(s) represent the group and a few people, including our amazing Cindy Alpert, are members-at-large. Any one of you are invited to attend calls or participate.

Our IBC meets on Zoom four times a year to share information and ideas, to facilitate inter-branch support, and to help coordinate projects of common interest. Tech Trek is a big focus (the IBC runs the Tech Trek Ice Cream Social each year for the campers from all the CCC branches), as is Public Policy (Catherine Lewis is a part of this IBC sub-committee). Other common discussion topics include member recruitment and working with the State and National teams.

Kathleen Schaub

Walking Group



What a beautiful day November 11 (Veteran's Day) was for our monthly walk. We had a full turnout of 8 walkers: (L to R) Chris Burchik, Jo Ann Barron, Ashley Cherry, Kathleen Schaub, Andrée Chagnon, Lois Kamoroff, Lorraine Weir, and Carol Moore. Most walked twice around the shimmering lake but three of us did a third lap. We look forward to seeing more walkers for our December 9 gathering!

Fondly,
Lois and Andrée

Lunch Bunch



Lunch Bunch enjoys the varied offerings at Pho Hoa in November. Join us for barbecue at Hazy this month!



Interest Groups

GAME NIGHT

First Saturday

Saturday, December 2; 7:00 PM

Game night will be at Chris White's home: Kindly RSVP to Chris.

Questions? Contact Lucy Weed

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### LUNCH BUNCH

#### First Tuesday

**Tuesday, December 5; 11:30 AM**

We'll meet at Hazy Barbecue, 200 Hartz Avenue, Danville. To join the email reminder list, contact:

Margo James

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LOCAL WALKING GROUP

Second Saturday

Saturday, December 9; 9:00 AM

We'll walk around Annabel Lake at Bishop Ranch. The walkway is gravel and paved in some areas and an easy, flat terrain. Parking should be easy at the Target parking lot. Everyone is welcome, including your dogs!

RSVP if you would like to be a part of this interest group. Contact:

Andrée Chagnon

Lois Kamoroff

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### DAYTIME READERS

#### Second Monday

**Monday, December 11; 1:00–3:00 PM**

**Via Zoom videoconference**

We are reading *The Bandit Queens* by Parini Shroff, the 2023 Read Contra Costa finalist. Margo James will lead the discussion. You can find a list of events scheduled around this book here: <https://ccclib.org/read-contra-costa/>

If you have questions or wish to be put on the email list to receive a Zoom invitation, please contact

Margo James

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BOCCE

We held our formation meeting November 9 and decided to play once a month. Our first official game will be Saturday, January 20, at 1:00–3:00 PM; location will be posted next month. If you want to practice before our first game, please contact Kathy Senti.

Interest Groups

FOURTH FRIDAY FLICKS (FFF)

Friday, December 15; 7:30 PM (Note Special Date)

Movie: *Julie & Julia*, a 2009 film. Available on YouTube free with ads and available on other streaming platforms for a nominal fee. Let Chris White know if you wish to receive a Zoom link for the above event.

We need volunteers to pick a film for 1/26/2024

Please Volunteer!!

Contact: Chris White

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### THE NIGHT BOOK GROUP

#### Third Monday

**Via Zoom videoconference**

**Monday, December 18; 7:00 PM**

Karen Van Zino will review *The Presence of Absence*, by Simon Van Booy.

Questions? Contact Cheri Ng

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TUESDAY NIGHT BRIDGE

Tuesday, December 19; 7:00–10:00 PM or so

Via Zoom and/or in person

Hostess: Fran Bartholomew

3271 El Suyo Drive, San Ramon

RSVP: Chris White

We will play via Zoom/teleconference and BridgeBase and/or in person if enough people wish to get together. Please RSVP and let me know:

1. if you are interested in playing or not and
2. if you wish to play in person or virtual.

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### WOMEN IN HISTORY

**Tuesday, December 20; 1:00 PM**

**Via Zoom videoconference**

We are listening to The History Chicks podcast Episode 29: Julia Child. Margo James will lead the discussion.

If you have questions or wish to be put on the email list to receive a Zoom invitation, please contact

Margo James

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LET'S GO!

If you would like to organize a visit to an interesting location and invite some of your AAUW members to join you, let me know:

Chris White

2023–2024 Board

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Kathleen Schaub

IMMEDIATE PAST CO-PRESIDENTS

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Claire Mailhot
Patty Nobles

CO-RECORDING SECRETARIES

Judy Bracken
Nancy Vandell

AAUW San Ramon Information

Websites:

Branch Website: www.sanramon-ca.aauw.net
Webmaster: Isabel Lau

Association website: www.aauw.org
CA State website: www.aauw-ca.org
CCC IBC website: cbc-ibc-ca.aauw.org

Branch mailing address:

P.O. Box 336, San Ramon, CA 94583

Branch email address:

aauwsr@gmail.com

Facebook: San Ramon University Women/AAUW

Instagram: @sanramonaauw

Appointed Officers

ART & WIND FESTIVAL

Janet Williams

COMMUNICATION

Isabel Lau

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Duties have been assumed by Membership

GOV TREK

Rebecca Said
Leela Gopal

HOSPITALITY/FELLOWSHIP

Andrée Chagnon

NEWSLETTER

Isabel Lau
Carol Lombardi

PUBLIC POLICY

Catherine Lewis

TECH TREK

Cindy Alpert