

THE VIEW FROM SAN RAMON

Volume 40, Number 6

February 2024



Gianni's
ITALIAN BISTRO



**Tips for Change Event
Supporting AAUW San Ramon Tech Trek**

**Monday, February 5
4:30 PM–8:00 PM**

Dine-in or Takeout

**2065 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon
(925) 820-6969**

**Gather your friends and family,
reserve a table, or
place your takeout order!**

See Page 4 for More 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.

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 7:00 PM Game Night Lucy Weed
4	5 4:30PM– 8:00 PM Gianni's Fundraiser for Tech Trek	6 11:30 AM Lunch Bunch Margo James	7	8	9	10 Happy Lunar New Year! 9:00 AM Local Walking Group Lois Kamoroff
11	12 1:00 PM Daytime Readers Margo James 7:00 PM Board Meeting via Zoom	13	14 	15	16	17 1:00 PM Bocce Kathy Senti
18	19  7:00 PM Night Book Group Cheri Ng	20 7:00 PM Bridge Chris White	21 1:00 PM Women in History Margo James	22	23	24
25	26 7:00 PM Hidden Brain Kathy Senti	27	28	29	March 1 *Special Date* 7:30 PM Friday Flicks Chris White	

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.

Save the Dates

March 21 **Program: Update on School Board Project and Scholarship Thank-You gift basket drawing**
April 27 **Shredding Fundraiser for Scholarship**

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

President's Pen



Is It Time to Take a Leap?

Leap and the net will appear.

John Burroughs, American author

Some changes can upset your whole day! Or if you were a citizen of England or an English colony in September 1752, eleven days. That was when an act of Parliament swept in the Gregorian calendar (the standard calendar now used by most of the world), advancing the date in England from September 2 to September 14. Rioters in the streets supposedly demanded that the government “give us back our eleven days!”

Okay, maybe those riots didn't really happen. But change can be hard, and the English weren't exactly excited about the innovation that gave us leap year. It took them 170 years to accept this new and more accurate calendar. In 1582, Aloysius Lilius, an Italian, calculated that Earth's rotation was actually 365.2422 days, not the 365.25 days that the Romans had estimated. The difference was just a measly couple of decimal points, but adopting this new calendar with a “leap day” every 4 years (except the years divisible by 400, including 2000), stopped Easter from creeping farther and farther away from the spring equinox.

Please consider taking these two “leaps” in 2024 to enrich our organization:

✂ **Vote YES to AAUW Open Membership.** This spring you have a chance to help AAUW become a bigger and richer community. Your vote counts! Please click YES on the open membership initiative vote email when it arrives in your inbox. (Check your spam folder if you don't receive it.)

This initiative changes the national bylaws to accept open membership (that is, no college requirement). Today, AAUW is viewed by many possible funding grantors as a discriminatory organization (GASP! What, us?) and

therefore not qualified for funds, despite our good work. Some branches report that interested prospective members, including Tech Trek moms and small business owners, have been turned down for membership because they didn't have degrees. This has been voted on several times over the years and, while each vote brings it closer to passing, it hasn't yet passed. Let's cross the threshold in 2024.

✂ **Join the AAUW San Ramon board.** The board nominating committee will be out in force looking to fill open positions on the 2024–2025 board. We need you! Are you interested in learning more? Please respond to the nominating committee if they call—or contact me.

By the way, our current calendar is *still* off by 26 seconds per year so the folks in 4909 will have to add another extra day to get even. Hopefully, they'll be prepared by then.

Here's more on leap year if you're interested:

<https://time.com/4237292/leap-year-leap-day-history/>

Kathleen Schaub, President

Two Public Policy Webinars Open to All Members

Inclusion in Practice: How AAUW's Policies and Practices Promote Inclusion

January 31, 2024; 4:00 PM Pacific time

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_lhHjiqZARNmRqdXSR9KxFQ

School Boards: The Battleground for the Education Culture Wars

February 7, 2024; 4:00 PM Pacific time

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Y2RuiP5PSNuey04jKNymAA

Contact Catherine Lewis for more information:

lewisbusinessdevelopment@gmail.com

Or visit our branch website [here](#)

Happy February Birthdays!

Carol Lombardi
Sarah Scholl
Margo James
Kathy Senti
Victoria Bissell
Lynda Gann

Tech Trek



Tips for Change Fundraiser Gianni's Italian Bistro

Monday, February 5

4:30 PM–8:00 PM

**2065 San Ramon Valley Blvd
(925) 820-6969**

Reserve a table or order online

Click here: <https://giannissanramon.com/>

This is the primary fundraiser for Tech Trek

Enjoy the wonderful food and fun atmosphere of this unique fundraiser: Owners Gianni and Melanie Bartoletti support our branch by generously donating 10% of the evening's proceeds and 100% of the tips to AAUW San Ramon Tech Trek.

If you dine indoors, you might be served by our CSUEB Renaissance Scholars, who have graciously offered to be part of our waitstaff for the evening. Or you may have the pleasure of seeing one of your AAUW friends serving you.

Encourage your friends, neighbors, and family to join you in supporting us by dining in or placing a takeout order. Please use the attached flyer (on page 10) to share more information about this great event.

If you cannot make the event and still wish to donate, please mail a check payable to AAUW CA SPF with Tech Trek San Ramon in the memo line to PO Box 336, San Ramon CA 94583. Or donate online by clicking here: <https://specialprojectsfund-ca.aauw.net/donate/> and selecting AAUW CA Projects–Tech Trek.

Our committee is beginning our efforts to receive nominations for Tech Trek camp. Middle schools in San Ramon have been contacted, and we will begin the application review process in February! Thank you to the members who graciously offered to be on the committee.

Thank you in advance for all your support.
Looking forward to a fantastic 2024!

Cindy Alpert
Tech Trek Coordinator

Program

Don't Miss Out in March—Save the Date!

**Update on School Board Project
from SRVUSD School Board President
Laura Bratt**

Thursday, March 21, 6:30 PM–7:30 PM

**San Ramon Community Center
Terrace Room
12501 Alcosta Blvd.
Free and Open to the Public**

Plan to attend our next program: This educational and inspirational presentation will expand on the AAUW CA initiative, The School Board Project. We will learn as we hear from Laura Bratt, SRVUSD School Board President, ways we can continue to support public education in the San Ramon Valley. Laura will be interviewed by Ravneet Julk—local PTA leader, parent, and lawyer. Ravneet will ask Laura, in a relaxed, conversational setting, about the current climate in SRVUSD and ask her about public education issues in SRVUSD and beyond. We will hear what is occurring and how we can jump in to support efforts to continue providing equal access to quality public education for all students.

Come prepared to gain a greater understanding of what is happening, what is of greatest importance and impact, and how we can influence others to support public education for all.

The event is open to the public. Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch members will be our guests too. The event is free to all. Look for an Evite in late February and please respond so we get an accurate count of attendees.

Thanks!
Cindy Alpert & Karen Rice
Co-VPs Program

Reminder: Scholarship Thank-You Gift Basket
drawing right after this program!



Membership



Membership Matters

New Member: Archana Vashneya

It is a pleasure to welcome new member **Archana Vashneya**. Many of you were able to meet Archana at the September Welcome Back Meeting, when her daughter Esha was honored as one of our Tech Trek '23 campers. Esha and Archana attended the Girls Garage program.

Our San Ramon branch remains strong with 103 members. Together we have welcomed 14 new members in the last year. We've grown because we've invited others to share our camaraderie and the mission of our branch. The programs about which we are passionate have interested new members as well: 2 of our newest members are mothers of our Tech Trek 2023 campers, and 4 of our members are our 2023 Renaissance Scholars (whom we annually sponsor as student affiliates). Some members have heard about us through contacts in the community, others rejoin after time away, and several stay with us even after moving out of the area in order to remain active in our Special Interest Groups.

Working together, we've grown. Let's keep up these good works!

New Member Spotlight Ann Skudlark



Ann Skudlark was born in New Jersey; she graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a degree in Business and received her MBA from the University of South Florida. Ann and her husband, Michael, have three children.

Ann retired last year after working 38 years for AT&T as Director of Big Data Research. She now volunteers at the

San Ramon Library Foundation's used book store and for the East Bay Regional Parks' trail safety patrol. During tax season, she volunteers for the Tax Aide Program.

She enjoys running, biking, swimming, yoga, and exercise classes. Her quest is to visit all 63 national parks, so their January trip to White Sands in New Mexico marked #49.

Fun fact: Ann holds 18 patents.

Happy Valentines Day from your Membership Team:
Harvalee, Margo, & Betsy

Local Scholarship



Last Gift Card Auction

Our final email Gift Card Auction for this fiscal year will take place this month. Included are a few new gift cards, plus one from Ma Jolie Salon and Spa in San Ramon! Please watch for an email blast with all the details during the second week of February.

Coming March 21: Gift Basket Drawing

We will hold our annual Thank-You Gift Basket drawing after the March 21 program (see page 4). Any member, their family, or friends who make a monetary donation (regardless of amount) to Local Scholarship—either directly or through SPF—will have their name entered in a drawing for this gift basket! Donations made starting July 1, 2023 through the March 21 drawing are eligible. ONE LUCKY donor's name will be drawn, and the winner doesn't need to be present to win—although we hope you will!

Save the Date: April 27 Shredding Event

Thank you in advance for your much-needed and deeply appreciated support!

Loranne Weir, Co-VP with Susan Walker-Christensen

**Happy 2024:
Year of the Dragon**



Public Policy



Is There a Hidden Agenda Behind the “Parents’ Rights” Movement?

By Kathi Harper, Chair, AAUW California Public Policy
School Board Project Committee

We members of the AAUW California Public Policy School Board Project sub-committee frequently come across materials from groups advocating for book-banning, curriculum censorship, and policies which negatively impact the lives of LGBTQ+ students, in the name of “Parent’s Rights.” For example the House of Representatives recently passed H.R. 5, the “Parents Bill of Rights Act.” Eight governors have signed legislation with similar titles.

H.R. 5 establishes the rights of parents to, among other things: review curriculum; inspect the books and other reading materials in the school library; be advised of policies that permit transgender girls to compete on female athletic teams or use bathrooms or lockers designated for females; and provide consent before a school may use their child’s chosen name or pronouns on forms, or change the child’s sex-based accommodations. Many of the state laws noted above require the removal of “inappropriate” materials upon the objection of a single person.

AAUW California recognizes that not all our members will find these policies objectionable. And to be sure, most of our members would agree with this statement from PEN America, a human rights and free expression organization: “There is no question that parents deserve a say in shaping their children’s educations; that they have a moral and legal responsibility for their children, and the freedom to make fundamental decisions for their families.” (Suzanne Nossel, PEN America CEO, *Time* Sept. 20, 2022.)

However, legitimate questions are raised when one parent’s “right” to control what *their* child reads and learns collides with another parent’s right to ensure their child has access to a broad and diverse range of educational materials. Or when a parent’s “right” to know if their child confides to a teacher regarding a sexual identity unknown to the parent collides with the student’s right to privacy. Or when one parent’s “right” to ensure her daughter doesn’t play on the same team as a transgender girl collides with that girl’s right to partake in all the same activities as other girls, or to feel safe in the campus environment.


AAUW California advocates for a diverse curriculum in our schools, as well as the protection of all forms of gender identity and expression. It is a cause of concern when the rallying cry of “parents’ rights” is, as stated by PEN America, “wielded to do far more than give parents their rightful voice; it is turning public schools into political battle grounds, fracturing communities, and diverting time and energy away from teaching and learning.” Additionally, according to the National Education Association (NEA), H.R. 5 “ignores the breadth of parental engagement” that already exists, “disregards educator experience and expertise” and “inserts the government into local decisions.”

PEN America worries that the current emphasis on working with schools for the betterment of the child has been replaced with a parental focus on wanting to impose their personal beliefs – moral, religious, and/or political – on the entire education system. As an organization founded on the principal of expanding educational opportunities we might all heed Suzanne Nossel’s final words in her *Time* article: “The phrase ‘parents’ rights’ may have a nice ring to it, but the agenda now afoot in its name should sound alarms for all those who care about the future of public education.”

Read more at: [Pen.org](https://www.pen.org), [Nea.org](https://www.nea.org)

Source: AAUW *Public Policy News*, January 2024 [here](#).

Catherine Lewis, Public Policy



Writing Diverse Stories
February 15, 2024
6 – 8 PM
Danville Congregational Church
989 San Ramon Valley Blvd.
\$10 Donation per person
for non-AAUW members

AAUW
Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek (CA) Branch

In this presentation, award-winning author and AAUW Fellow K. X. Song touches on the creative process behind her stories, the nonlinear trajectory of her publishing journey in the US, and the importance of diversity and representation in storytelling and media at large. She will also discuss the state of the US publishing industry today and some of the challenges particular to women of color in the industry.

RSVP by visiting our website <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/>

Program Recap Girls Garage, January 18



Kristy Higaes describes Girls Garage projects—from chicken tractors to greenhouses to a geodesic dome—and the students who build them. Photo below from the Girls Garage website.



Lunch Bunch at Urban Plates in January: As always, we had great conversations and a good meal. Longtime members Renae Buckser and Anne Hayden joined us for the first time since Covid. Hope to see you next time!

Interest Groups

GAME NIGHT

First Saturday

Saturday, February 3; 7:00 PM

Host: Diane Griffiths

Please RSVP by emailing Diane at

Questions? Contact Lucy Weed



LUNCH BUNCH

First Tuesday

Tuesday, February 6; 11:30 AM

We'll meet at Chopan Kabob, 21314 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon (Alcosta exit). It's an Afghan restaurant with an intriguing menu at

<https://www.chopankabob.com/san-ramon-menu>

If you have a restaurant that you would like to recommend for Lunch Bunch, please let me know. We appreciate the suggestions!

To join the e-mail reminder list, contact:

Margo James



LOCAL WALKING GROUP

Second Saturday

Saturday, February 10; 9:00 AM

We'll walk around the 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



DAYTIME READERS

Second Monday

Monday, February 12; 1:00–3:00 PM

In person

Host: Chris White

94 Lewes Court, San Ramon

We will discuss *Grey Bees* by Andrey Kurkov.

Margo James

Interest Groups

BOCCE

Saturday, February 17; 1:00–3:00 PM

We'll play at Souyen Park, Watermill Road, San Ramon. Please bring your bocce balls if you have them. If the weather is bad or the courts are too wet, Kathy will see if we can play on the indoor courts at DaBoccery in Livermore. If not, we will skip this month. Kathy will email the people who have notified her they are interested in this group to let them know what to expect. Future games will be held the third Saturday of each month. If you have questions, please call or text Kathy Senti

~~~~~

### THE NIGHT BOOK GROUP

**Third Monday**

**Via Zoom videoconference**

**Monday, February 19; 7:00 PM**

Rebecca Said will lead our discussion of *Happiness Falls*, by Angie Kim.

Questions? Contact Cheri Ng

~~~~~

TUESDAY NIGHT BRIDGE

Tuesday, February 20; 7:00–10:00 PM or so

Hostess: TBD

RSVP: Chris White

We will play via Zoom/teleconference and BridgeBase and/or in-person.

Please RSVP and let me know:

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



Interest Groups

WOMEN IN HISTORY

Wednesday, February 21; 1:00 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Cindy Alpert will lead a discussion of Cleopatra. To listen to the podcast on your computer, go to <https://thehistorychicks.com/?s=cleopatra>; to listen on your phone, go to your podcast app, search for The History Chicks, then search for Episode 46, Cleopatra.

To join the e-mail reminder list, contact:
Margo James

~~~~~

### HIDDEN BRAIN PODCAST

**Monday, February 26; 7:00 PM**

**Via Zoom teleconference**

The episode we will discuss, called "Paradox of Pleasure," was released July 10. Kathy will be the host. You can find it on your favorite podcast application.

If you are interested in participating in a discussion about an episode of the Hidden Brain podcast, please contact Kathy Senti

~~~~~

FOURTH FRIDAY FLICKS (FFF)

Friday, March 1; 7:30 PM Special Date**

Via Zoom videoconference

Discussion leader: Lucy Weed.

Film to watch: *Maestro*: Available to stream on Netflix.

We need volunteers. Please volunteer!

**Note date change due to San Ramon Foreign Film Series every Friday in February.
Contact Chris White

~~~~~

### LET'S GO

Nothing is planned for February

If you would like to organize a visit to some location and invite AAUW members to join you, let me know.

.



## 2023–2024 Board

### PRESIDENT

Kathleen Schaub

### IMMEDIATE PAST CO-PRESIDENTS

Janice Colby  
Kathleen Schaub

### CO-VICE PRESIDENTS, PROGRAM

Cindy Alpert  
Karen Rice

### CO-VICE PRESIDENTS, MEMBERSHIP

Harvalee Grimm  
Betsy Hoffmann  
Margo James

### VICE PRESIDENT, THE FUND OPEN

### CO-VICE PRESIDENTS, SCHOLARSHIP

Susan Walker-Christensen  
Loranne Weir

### CO-VICE PRESIDENTS, FINANCE

Claire Mailhot  
Patty Nobles

### CO-RECORDING SECRETARIES

Judy Bracken  
Nancy Vandell

## AAUW San Ramon Information

### **Websites:**

Branch Website: [www.sanramon-ca.aauw.net](http://www.sanramon-ca.aauw.net)

Webmaster: Isabel Lau

Association website: [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)

CA State website: [www.aauw-ca.org](http://www.aauw-ca.org)

CCC IBC website: [cbc-ibc-ca.aauw.org](http://cbc-ibc-ca.aauw.org)

### **Branch mailing address:**

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

### **Branch email address:**

[aauwsr@gmail.com](mailto: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



## Tips For Change Event benefitting



San Ramon (CA) Branch

# MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5TH

**DINING & PICK UP AVAILABLE BETWEEN 4:30PM - 8:00PM**  
**GO TO [WWW.GIANNISSANRAMON.COM](http://WWW.GIANNISSANRAMON.COM) OR CALL 925-820-6969**  
**TO MAKE A RESERVATION OR PLACE A TO-GO ORDER**

The San Ramon Branch of AAUW promotes equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and scholarships. We build relationships among local women and support our purpose through community engagement, events, activities, and educating programs that enrich our lives.

As always, all tips and 10% of sales go to support the organization. You will enjoy a wonderful dinner and support a worthy cause. It's a Win-Win

2065 SAN RAMON VALLEY BLVD.  
SAN RAMON, CA. 94583  
[WWW.GIANNISSANRAMON.COM](http://WWW.GIANNISSANRAMON.COM)  
925.820.6969



*Gianni's*  
ITALIAN BISTRO