

THE VIEW FROM SAN RAMON

Volume 41, Number 4

December 2024

A Show of Hands for Finding Joy



Wishing you joy-filled
holidays from your
AAUW Board

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	3 11:30 AM Lunch Bunch Margo James	4	5	6	7 7:00 PM Game Night Lucy Weed
		Giving Tuesday				
8	9 1:00 PM Daytime Readers Margo James	10	11	12	13	14 9:00 AM Local Walking Group Lois Kamoroff
	6:30 PM Board Meeting via Zoom					
15	16 7:00 PM Night Book Group Cheri Ng	17 7:00 PM Bridge Chris White	18 1:00 PM Women in History Margo James	19	20	21 1:00 PM Bocce Kathy Senti Winter Solstice
22	23	24	25 Christmas Day Hanukkah Begins	26 Kwanzaa Begins	27 7:30 PM Fourth Friday Flicks Chris White	28
29	30	31 	January 1 Happy New Year!			

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

December 3 Giving Tuesday (see article on page 6)
 January 16 Program: All About the Quest Science Center
 February 19 Dine for a Cause, Virtue + Vice Restaurant, Danville

Watch for more information about our 2025 events in future newsletters.

Presidents' Pen



If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.

—Maya Angelou

As I reflected on what to write this month, one word continued to pop into my head: CHANGE. Maybe it's the time of year, maybe it's the election results, maybe it's just this "phase" of life—but all contributed to the prominent thought.

Change can be a verb or a noun. The verb is to make someone or something different; to alter or modify or replace. The definition of the noun is the act or instance of making or becoming different. What stands out to me is that change results in something different. And maybe the difference is what creates feelings of uncertainty.

Maya Angelou's advice seems a little harsh, yet practicing it can help ease the change process. Not all change is bad, so looking at the positive side of change can be uplifting.

AAUW has focused on changing lives of women and girls for over 140 years through research, advocacy, and education. As members, we can support this in different ways: attend one of the many AAUW webinars, donate to one of the branch community action projects (Local Scholarship or Tech Trek) or to the AAUW Fund, become a two-minute activist to send messages to Congress on legislation impacting women and girls. If we all contribute a little time, energy, or money, great things can happen.

As we welcome December, remember to take time for one of the most important gifts in this world: YOU. Take a few minutes to reflect on all the special talents you possess and how you make the world around you a better place. I know I appreciate the time, energy, and dedication of so many people who continue to help make our branch a fun group.

Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change.

—Wayne Dyer

Have a joyous holiday season and a great start to 2025!

Cindy Alpert
Co-President

**You're Invited:
Post-Election Priorities for AAUW
Featuring Megan Kissell,
Senior Directory of Policy**

**AAUW Silicon Valley Branch Program
Wednesday December 4, 4:00 PM
Via Zoom Videoconference**

The AAUW Silicon Valley Branch will host a Zoom meeting featuring Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy for AAUW. Meghan will speak about post-election priorities for AAUW, particularly as it relates to social justice issues, including reproductive rights, childcare, secure food and housing, voting rights, and more.

This is a great opportunity to learn about how AAUW will continue to advocate for women and girls.

You can register [HERE](#).



Happy Holidays

Happy December Birthdays!

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

Program

Save the Date:

**All About the Quest Science Center
Thursday, January 16; 6:30 PM
San Ramon Community Center
Terrace Room
12501 Alcosta Blvd.**

Holiday Cheer Continues in the New Year!

Join us for an exciting and informative program about the Quest Science Center. Monya Lane, CEO and Board Chairperson for the Science Center, will talk to us about the Science Center's mission and purpose, which focuses on educating the public about scientific advances. Quest has a distinguished history of leadership, education outreach, community building, volunteerism, and fundraising.

This organization was founded in 2017 by a group of Lawrence Livermore Lab retirees and community leaders who decided to share their love of science and technology. They paid it forward by leading an effort to create a science center in downtown Livermore where everyone—at any age—would have engaging experiences and understand the impact science has on society.

The idea behind the center is to encourage innovation and creativity with hands-on activities that inspire students, businesses, and lifelong learners.

Join us in the Terrace Room for an innovative and fun presentation—and it's open to the public, so bring a friend!

Our Thanks to All Who Attended...

Our second annual Friendsgiving event was held on November 21 and we thank all who organized, planned, and attended this lovely event. It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends far and near while sharing some tasty refreshments, lively games, and spirited conversation.

Remember Our February Event!

Plan an evening out on Wednesday, February 19 for our annual Tech Trek Fundraiser at a NEW location: Virtue + Vice, located in the heart of Danville at 267 Hartz Avenue. This new location plus your participation will make for a delightful evening.

In April, that there will be another joint program with both the Livermore-Dublin-Pleasanton and the Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branches. More information about this event is to come in the new year.

Please remember to RSVP for all AAUW events and programs, so we are sure to have all the proper materials and goodies for our attendees. Excited to see you ALL at these events in 2025!

Warm holiday wishes and cheers to a wonderful New Year!

Janice Colby & Karen Rice
Co-VPs, Program

Local Scholarship



See You in 2025!

Watch for our Email Gift Card Auction fundraiser and other Local Scholarship news in the January newsletter.

Susan Walker-Christensen and Lorraine Weir
Local Scholarship Chairs

Can You Help?



Tech Trek Committee would like **seven people** to be helpers at our Dine for a Cause event, which is a “fun”draiser where we volunteer as waitstaff. Guests of the restaurant are served by us, and our branch receives 10% of food and drink sales and **100% of the tips**. Training is provided on the day of the event. This is a one-time, short commitment where you get to meet a lot of AAUW members and friends in the community!

WHEN February 19, 2025; 4:00 PM–8:00 PM
WHAT **Waitstaff Wanna Be:** Take dinner orders, serve food, bus tables
WHERE Virtue + Vice restaurant in Danville
WHY Support this fundraiser for Tech Trek!

Let Cindy Alpert or Kathy Senti know if you want to help.

Membership



Two New Member Spotlights

Laurinda Ochoa



Laurinda Ochoa was born in Washington DC, grew up in Southern California, and has lived in the Bay Area for over 40 years. She and her husband have three daughters and live in Danville.

Laurinda received her BA degree from UCLA and her Juris Doctor degree from Berkeley School of Law. She practiced in litigation before working with and retiring from the Alameda County District Attorney's office.

Laurinda is a member of four AAUW branches and the AAUW California Public Policy Committee's School Board Project. She is a UC Master Gardener, a docent for the East Bay Regional Parks Botanical Garden, and a member of League of Women Voters.

A memorable accomplishment for Laurinda was being named "Hero" by the *Oakland Tribune* for her work to prosecute those involved in a case of "complex elder abuse fraud." She established the Elder Abuse Prosecution Team in Alameda County in the 1990s.

Maribel Fraser



Maribel Fraser was born in San Salvador, El Salvador and immigrated to the United States in 1970. She and her husband live in San Ramon.

Maribel received her bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and her Master of Business Administration from Golden Gate University. She retired from AT&T after more than 35 years. Currently, she is a seasonal volunteer tax aide for AARP and also a board member for Wonderfest, a non-profit educational corporation whose mission is to inspire and nurture a deep sense of wonder about the world.

Maribel enjoys traveling, running, reading, and learning French. A memorable adventure was hiking to the top of Mount Whitney and back in one day.

By the Numbers

Our membership holds steady at **102** members! Your involvement keeps us thriving by bringing in new members, participating in our programs and interest groups, and maintaining our bonds of acquaintance and friendship. This is an accomplishment we can be proud of, as many other organizations struggle to remain vibrant and open. Remember to give us a call if we can be of assistance to you or someone you know.

Corresponding Secretary

Especially during this time of year, it is nice to remember our AAUW friends. Please let us know if we can send a note of support or good cheer to any of our members. Thank you to everyone who has informed us of members' needs and celebrations!

Your National Online Account

Please activate your online national account if you have not already done so. Follow these steps:

- Go to: aauw.org
- Select: Log in (upper right of screen)
- Welcome: "*If you're an AAUW member logging in for the first time, or if you've forgotten your password, click forgot password*" (in blue near the bottom of the screen)
- Reset your password: Use your same email address as in the branch directory

If you have trouble activating your account, please let Harvalee or Margo know. We will be glad to help!

Directory

The 2024–2025 Branch Directory was sent to all members in September. The directory is a work in progress and is constantly being updated and/or corrected. If you have any changes or additions or have misplaced your directory and would like another copy, please contact Margo.

We wish you all a healthy, safe, and joyous holiday season.

Your Membership Team
Harvalee Grimm & Margo James

Tech Trek



It's time to think about Tech Trek 2025!

There is a lot to do to prepare for the camps, which take place at various colleges and universities in California. The students we select will attend Camp Franklin at Sonoma State University. The camp will be held June 22–28, 2025. The cost will be \$1,300 per camper, and we budgeted to send five girls. We will kick off the camper selection process in early January and make our final choices in March.

The selection process starts with nominations from teachers at each of the middle schools in San Ramon. Our goal is to send at least one girl from each school this year. The nominees submit a standard application through an online system. The committee then reviews the applications, identifies qualified candidates, interviews the candidates, and then decides on who is offered a campership. The cost of camp is covered by the branch through various fundraisers and donations.

If you would like to join the Tech Trek camper selection committee, please contact Cindy Alpert or Kathy Senti.

Dine for a Cause: February 19, 2025

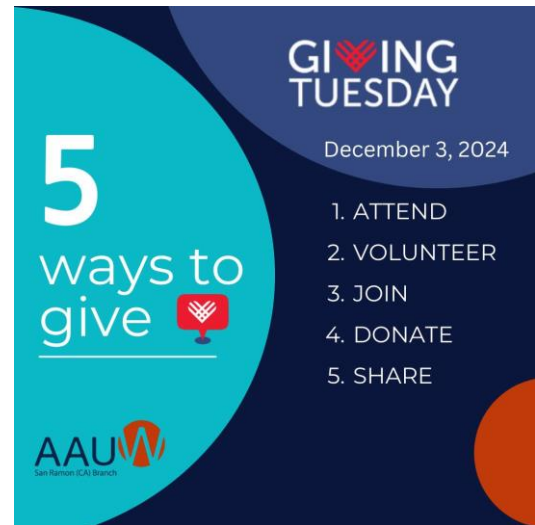
We are excited to hold our big fundraiser at a new location this year: **Virtue + Vice Restaurant in Danville.** Volunteer branch members will be servers, and we earn 10% of all sales plus 100% of the tips. It is a fun evening to spend with friends and family. All the details will be shared in the January newsletter. (See more details about this volunteer opportunity on page 4.)

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

Cindy Alpert & Kathy Senti
Tech Trek Coordinators

**Thank you to our eagle-eyed
volunteer reviewers
Nancy Vandell and Lucy Weed**

Communication



Embrace the Power of Your Generosity

In a world where digital connectivity has reshaped the way we communicate and connect, help us promote cooperation and social connection and invest in initiatives that directly address systemic issues facing girls and women today.

How?

Five Ways to Give:

1. **Attend:** Join us at a publicized event and don't forget to bring a friend.
2. **Volunteer:** Share your time and talents with us. It can be a one-time commitment ("snackable") or ongoing. The choice is yours!
3. **Join AAUW:** Become a member. Give the gift of a membership to a new graduate. Invite a friend to join. There is strength in numbers. [Visit our website for details.](#)
4. **Donate:** Your generosity is essential in supporting Local Scholarships, Tech Trek and the AAUW Fund. [Visit our website for details.](#)
5. **Share:** Share our posts, newsletters, and information with family and friends. Make sure you follow us on social media ([Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)).

Isabel Lau, Communication
With Carol Lombardi and Beth Robertson

Public Policy



AAUW California Public Policy Update

A Successful 2024 Legislative Agenda

By Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko, Co-chairs AAUW California Public Policy Committee

2024 has been an exciting year for AAUW California's Legislative Agenda. There were many excellent bills that were introduced in the legislature early in the year. The Public Policy Committee evaluated over 60 of these bills that were most closely aligned with our Public Policy Priorities. Our committee met virtually over a weekend in March to discuss and vote on the best bills to include in our 2024 Legislative Agenda, prioritizing them into A, B, C, and Watch categories. We selected 41 bills for our Legislative Agenda, not including the Watch bills, and from March through September we worked to educate about and advocate for these bills.

Thanks to the many AAUW members who participated in Lobby Days, to those who called or wrote to their legislators and the Governor through our Action Alert Network, and thanks in no small part to the tireless efforts of Kathy Van Osten, our Legislative Advocate, 29 of the 41 bills on our Legislative Agenda made it to the Governor's desk, and 25 of them have been signed into law!

Excitingly, all three of our A priority bills were signed by the Governor:

- Our signature bill AB 2843 was authored and sponsored by AAUW California. The bill eliminates cost sharing, including deductibles, from being imposed on any rape survivor seeking medical care following a rape. The bill was inspired when Kathi Harper, Public Policy Director, read an [OpEd piece](#) in the *Los Angeles Times* by Dr. Samuel Dickman, Chief Medical Officer at Planned Parenthood of Montana, describing the plight of countless rape survivors who do not seek medical care following their assault because of prohibitive costs. AB 2843 removes the cost barrier, ensuring that survivors can receive the care they need following a traumatic sexual attack.
- AB 2326, also sponsored by AAUW California, requires the Chancellors of the Community Colleges and the State Universities, and the President of the University of California, to provide an annual report of their schools' compliance with Title IX. The report will be publicly, orally

presented to the Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittees on Education Finance.

- AB 2099 makes it possible for the District Attorney to pursue felony charges for the posting of information about reproductive health care patients or providers if the posting and subsequent actions result in bodily injury.

Two of our B priority bills were signed into law:

- AB 1790 requires the CSU system to report on the implementation of recommendations provided in the California State Auditor report, to ensure Title IX compliance and protections against sexual harassment.
- AB 1831 expands the law prohibiting the possession and distribution of material depicting minors performing sexual activities to include AI and computer-generated images.

And very significantly, AB 1955 was signed into law. This was a C priority bill only because it was added to our Legislative Agenda later in the process.

- AB 1955 prohibits public schools from notifying parents if their child uses a different name or pronouns or identifies as a different gender than assigned at birth. California is the first state in the nation to ban forced outing of transgender students.

For additional details on all the bills on the 2024 Legislative Agenda, see our bill tracking report [here](#).

And if you have not yet signed up for Action Alerts, and would like to be notified about opportunities to advocate for AAUW California's priority legislation in 2025, please sign up [here](#):

Source: AAUW-CA Public Policy Newsletter, November 2024.

Catherine Lewis, Public Policy



**Winter Solstice
December 21**



Lunch Bunch

Ten of us dined at Mendocino Farms in November.



Friendsgiving

Friendsgiving was again a great success! See page 10 for more photos.



November Walking Group

We had a lovely walk around Lake Annabel on a perfect fall morning. The trees were ablaze with red and orange leaves. Thanks to our walkers for enjoyable conversations.

Interest Groups

LUNCH BUNCH

First Tuesday

Tuesday, December 3; 11:30 PM

We will meet at Erik's Delicafe, 2551 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon. Come enjoy a tasty lunch with friends before the busy holiday season! As always, we will pay separately for our meals. To join the email reminder list, contact:

Margo James



GAME NIGHT

First Saturday

Saturday, December 7; 7:00 PM

Game night will be at Chris White's. Please RSVP to Chris.

Questions? Contact Lucy Weed



DAYTIME READERS

Second Monday

Monday, December 9; 1:00–3:00 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Margo James will lead our discussion of *The Boys in the Boat*, by Daniel James Brown.

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



LOCAL WALKING GROUP

Second Saturday

Saturday, December 14; 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

Interest Groups

THE NIGHT BOOK GROUP

Third Monday

Via Zoom videoconference

Monday, December 16; 7:00 PM

Chris White will lead our discussion of *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury.

Questions? Contact Cheri Ng



TUESDAY NIGHT BRIDGE

Third Tuesday

Tuesday, December 17; 7:00–9:00 PM or so

Virtual and/or in Person

Host: Chris White

We will play bridge via Zoom videoconference and BridgeBase and/or in person. Kindly RSVP to Chris and let her know:

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



WOMEN IN HISTORY

Third Wednesday

Wednesday, December 18; 1:00 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Diane Griffiths will lead the discussion of [Episode 194: Mrs. Claus](#). Who is the woman behind the guy who distributes all the toys? Listen to this episode and find out! To join the email reminder list, contact: Margo James



LET'S GO!

Ruth Bancroft Garden of D'Lights

Janet Kleyn would like to find people interested in going to the Garden of D'Lights at the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek sometime between now and January 11. If interested, please email or call Janet so you can discuss dates/logistics. Sounds like fun!

Details, dates, and prices for this event are at [this link](#).

This member-driven interest group can go anywhere, anytime! Just contact Chris White if you have an idea for a great outing to a museum, lunch spot, or other Bay Area event. She'll give you ideas about navigating tickets, ride-share, and other details.

Interest Groups

BOCCE

Third Saturday

Saturday, December 21; 1:00–3:00 PM

(Weather permitting)

Come play bocce with us at Annabel Lake near Target. No prior experience is required—just the ability to have fun with friends. Please bring your bocce balls if you have them. Kathy will email the people who have notified her they are interested in this group to let them know what to expect.

If you have questions, please call or text

Kathy Senti



FOURTH FRIDAY FLICKS (FFF)

Friday, December 27; 7:30 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Discussion Leader: TBD

Watch: TBD

We need volunteers for these months: 12/27 and 1/24.

Special Note for Movie Lovers

The City of San Ramon is again presenting its Foreign Film Series in 2025. Dates are 2/7, 2/21, 2/28, and 3/7. Tickets can be purchased through the city at tickets.sanramon.ca.gov

Price is \$15.95 per show or \$59.68 for the 4-film series. Movies are from Japan, India, Kosovo, China.



Some members meet before the film for a dinner that coordinates with the country being featured. If you are interested in joining us, let me know.

Contact Chris White

Friendsgiving, November 21

*A chance to share good times
and great food with friends*



*Thank you to
photographers
Judy Bracken and
Harvalee Grimm!*

2024–2025 Board

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Judy Bracken

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

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Vice President, The Fund

AAUW San Ramon Information

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Beth Robertson bigtreescabin@comcast.net

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Branch mailing address:

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Branch email address: aauwsr@gmail.com

Facebook: San Ramon University Women/AAUW

Instagram: @sanramonaauw

Appointed Officers

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COMMUNICATION

Isabel Lau
Beth Robertson

GOV TREK

Leela Gopal

HOSPITALITY/FELLOWSHIP

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