



## October 2023 Advocate

Online at <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/newsletter/>

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### Third Thursday Member Meeting – October



**Protecting Honest, Inclusive Education: San Ramon Valley  
Unified School District  
October 19, 6:00 pm  
Danville Congregational Church  
989 San Ramon Valley Blvd, Danville**

The October branch meeting will feature a panel moderated by our Public Policy Chair, Laurinda Ochoa. The panel will focus on the current experience of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) regarding the issue of honest and inclusive education. They will provide context to enrich our understanding and action, including: California education code regarding parental rights and the Board of Education duty to educate; the local PTA's goals, role, and perspective; the student perspective; and our branch's historic involvement in advocating for quality public education in SRVUSD.

Our panelists will be:

- Shelley Clark, SRVUSD Board Trustee, Area 2
- Ravneet Julka, parent of four and attorney
- Lisa Gross, President of 32nd District PTA
- SRVUSD Student - to be announced
- Leslie Vilhauer, retired teacher, branch member and Past President, DAW AAUW

We look forward to an informative, energizing presentation!

We are updating the format of our member meetings after our summer break. At the start of the evening, there will be 30 minutes to **Meet, Munch, and Make a Difference**. We've also moved to a convenient, spacious new location – the *Danville Congregational Church*.

For more information and to RSVP – [click here](#)

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## Co-Presidents' Messages

*By Ogie Strogatz and Monika Witte, Co-Presidents*

*From Ogie* – As I write, I'm still reveling in the energy from our kickoff brunch, where we reconnected, recharged, and lifted up so many opportunities to bring about our vision of equity for all. The hands-on experiments and good times shared by our local Tech Trekkers underscored the importance of fundraising to support more young women exploring STEM careers. Our keynote speakers, Walnut Creek's Mayor Cindy Silva and Transportation Commissioner Samantha Caygill, inspired us with their personal journeys as leaders in government and challenged us



Monika Witte



Ogie Strogatz

to step up our civic engagement. We spotlighted [CA AAUW's Public Policy priorities](#) -- in particular, the [School Board Project](#), to help drive the identification and endorsement of local school board candidates who will champion inclusive, honest public education. DAW is demonstrating our commitment to the cause through our sustained presence at the San Ramon Valley Unified School District Board meetings. We're raising our local visibility, stimulating new membership, and inviting collaboration with other like-minded organizations. All of this vibrant activity is sourced to the gifted dedication and sisterhood that thrive in our branch's working committees and interest groups.

Grateful to be in community with you, o

*From Monika* - September was an incredibly productive month. In addition to gathering for our wonderful annual brunch, we have small teams that are -

- developing the focus and locating speakers for our monthly programs
- studying options for the future of the Local Scholarships program in DAW
- inventing creative ways to make our branch more welcoming, especially to the more than twenty members who joined DAW in the past year
- thinking about what the promise of membership in DAW is
- locating gardens for the 2024 Garden Tour
- demonstrating support for our local schools and school board

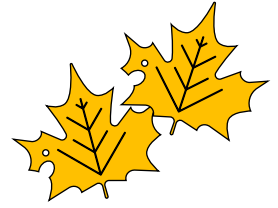
And, just as important, we are continuing to learn about the issues facing our community, and how to respond to Make a Difference.

I am hopeful for the year ahead, and thankful for all of you, Monika

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## October Checklist

- **October 10, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **October 19, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting:**  
**Protecting Honest, Inclusive Education: SRV Unified School District**  
[Click here](#) to RSVP
- **November 14, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **November 16, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting:**  
**The Biology of the Branch: What Does DAW Do and How Do We Do It?**  
Save the date!
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs
- **Volunteer!** – Board and committee positions are open for 2023-24! Learn more [here](#)



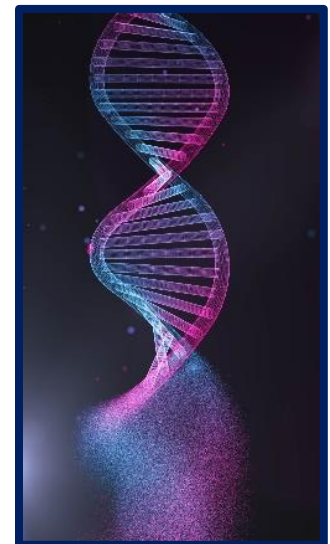
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## Third Thursday Member Meeting – November

### The Biology of the Branch: What Does DAW Do and How Do We Do It?

**November 16, 6:00pm**  
**Danville Congregational Church**

- “I want to help young women pursue higher education, but I really don’t get how Local Scholarships work. How can I find an explanation?”
- “I can’t build a website. What if I could help update content?”
- “Where does all the AAUW dues money go?”
- “Do seventh graders apply directly to attend Tech Trek?”
- “My calendar is slammed. I can’t lead a committee. Is there a way to carve out a piece of what needs to be done that’s manageable for me?”
- “I’ve heard of Lobby Day, never did it. Sounds involved. How much do you need to know about legislation and lawmakers? What’s the impact?”
- “I don’t have any background in STEM but Tech Trek sounds very cool, and I love working with middle schoolers. Would there be a role for me?”



You’ve got questions.

We’ve got answers.

Join us for the November Third Thursday meeting! The Board will lead an exploration of the inner workings of the branch. You might just discover a match between your superpowers and the activities that make for a healthy, energetic DAW.

**Save the date!**

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## AAUW California Public Policy Update

### Advancing Gender Equity Is Advancing Environmental Sustainability (And Vice Versa)

*By Missy Maceyko, Co-Chair, CA State Public Policy Committee*

After a year of wild weather in California, many of us may be thinking more about climate, environment, and sustainability. How does our concern with the weather relate to AAUW California's [Public Policy Priorities](#)? Advancing gender equity is directly related to environmental sustainability. The inverse is also true.

[The United Nations sustainable development goals](#), adopted in 2015, seek to push all countries to act to protect the planet, ensure widespread prosperity, and promote peace. Achieving gender equality, goal number five, is a crucial element in this overall strategy.



We know that [having greater gender diversity in leadership](#) improves organizations. One of AAUW California's public policy focus areas is increasing women in leadership positions. However, advancing this goal can also have positive climate impacts. [The UN has found that having greater gender diversity in climate discussions leads to improved outcomes](#) on climate-focused policies and projects. This is just one case in which we can see how sustainable development goal 5, promoting greater gender equality, alongside advancing AAUW California's public policy priorities, can be important for achieving sustainable development goal 13, creating more impactful climate action.

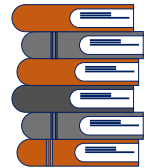
Data also shows us that (un)sustainable production and consumption patterns, which harm the environment, [tend to be gendered](#), with "green" choices being widely feminized. While this is a global trend, we see this in popular portrayals of more planet-friendly consumption choices in the United States, as well, such as veganism, [which tends to be marked as more "feminine"](#) and less "masculine." This example shows us that sustainable development goal 5, promoting greater gender equality, alongside AAUW California's overall public policy mission of advancing equity for women and girls, is also important for achieving sustainable development goal 12, which focuses on creating more planet-friendly and responsible production and consumption patterns.

Advancing gender equity is directly related to environmental sustainability, and vice versa. In advancing AAUW California's public policy goals, and expanding the rights of all women and girls, we can help create the conditions for greater justice and inclusion, economic parity, and environmental viability, all at the same time.

### **School Board Project Webinar and Toolkit for Action**

Did you miss it? Would you like to review it one more time? The video of the AAUW California's September 21 webinar about book banning and curricula censorship is now available! Watch this webinar to learn what the AAUW Public Policy team is doing, and how you can help.

The School Board Project Committee members explain the breadth of the problem and the scope of the proposed solution. There's also a portion with a representative from the League of Women Voters who gives members some useful tips about speaking out at school board meetings.



In addition to the webinar, AAUW CA has assembled an extensive toolkit to provide ideas and resources for action in counteracting book banning and censorship. Our branch is making use of the toolkit in our efforts with the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.

[Click here](#) to view the video and access the toolkit.

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### **Garden Tour Planning**

The DAW Garden Tour is in the works for 2024! It will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> – as usual that's the two days before Mothers' Day. We are looking for homeowners with interesting, preferably sustainable, gardens they would like to share. The tour committee is visiting potential gardens now to decide which ones to feature next year. If you're interested in showcasing your garden, or you know someone who has a beautiful garden, please contact Tena Gallagher at (925) 878-5161.

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### **Walnut Creek Restaurant Walk**

Join the **Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) AAUW branch** for a stroll to 19 restaurants in downtown Walnut Creek. You'll enjoy delicious food at this event on October 17 starting at 5:30 while helping OML raise funds for their Tech Trek scholarships. As with our branch, these scholarships go to rising 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls to attend the AAUW week-long Tech Trek STEM summer camp.

Quotes from OML's 2023 campers include: "This has been a life-changing experience!" "Even though I've always been interested in STEM, Tech Trek has really changed my view of this field and enhanced my excitement and enthusiasm!"

Tickets are \$36. Don't delay - send your request for tickets to Jan Cushman at [jancushman@comcast.net](mailto:jancushman@comcast.net), or call (925) 818-0459.

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## Notes from the 2023 Membership Brunch

The DAW Membership Brunch on Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> was a very enjoyable event at Crow Canyon Country Club that attracted almost 80 attendees. The day started with a chance for branch members and guests to mingle, meet new people, and learn about DAW Interest Groups and committees. Everyone then moved on to the brunch buffet service with a tasty selection of dishes.

Once everyone was seated with their brunch, the formal program started with introductions of the nine Tech Trek students who were able to attend. It was very inspiring and impressive to hear each student speak briefly about her TT experience and thank the branch for enabling them to participate in the camp.

Then the keynote speakers, Walnut Creek mayor Cindy Silva and Walnut Creek Transportation commissioner Samantha Caygill took the stage for their session – a conversation about their backgrounds and experiences in local politics and public service. They provided interesting insight into the possibilities of women in the political arena.

The program finished up with topics for the yearly branch business meeting. Treasurer Chris Ritter reviewed the newly approved branch budget, and co-presidents Ogie Strogatz and Monika Witte updated the crowd about coming branch activities.

Many thanks to brunch organizer Tena Gallagher and all who helped make the day possible. A delightful time was had by all!



Deborah Wechsler with Tech Trek students



Cindy Silva and Samantha Caygill



Ogie Strogatz, Tena Gallagher, Monika Witte



Brunch attendees

## AAUW National News

### Encouraging High School Girls in STEM Education

**STEMEd for Girls**, created by AAUW, is a series of lively, informative, and engaging free virtual workshops that will pave the way for success as students move through high school, into college, and eventually on to their career.

Make sure the high school girls in your life are registered for the next free online session, *College Search & Selection*, happening on Wednesday, October 4 at 7 p.m. EST. It will discuss college prep, including financial aid, scholarships, college essays, and much more.

Each session in this exciting series introduces girls to amazing women in STEM, engages participants with hands-on activities, and helps guide girls toward the areas that best match their skills and interests. Caregivers of high school girls, such as parents, grandparents, guardians and teachers are also welcome to attend the sessions.

[Click here](#) to learn more and to register for the program.

### Call for Action - Support for Voting Rights

On September 19, National Voter Registration Day, the AAUW-supported **John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act** was reintroduced in Congress. This bill is in keeping with our public policy priorities of supporting and expanding voting rights by restoring and modernizing the full protections of the historic Voting Rights Act of 1965. Make your voice heard, and make sure you are registered to vote!

[Click here](#) to encourage your representative to support the voting rights act.

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## Membership Corner

### Last Call for Renewing!

If you haven't renewed yet, please visit the branch website – [click here](#) – and look for the instructions for “Renewing Members”.

*Thank you for your continued membership and your support of advancing equity for women and girls!*

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## **“Stay Home” Policy Statement**

While we understand that people want to participate in person at our branch events, we also want to foster consideration for all members in creating a safe environment for everyone. Please consider this direction when you plan to attend a branch meeting.

**If you are feeling ill in any way, or have been in close contact with someone known to have tested positive for COVID in the last 10 days, please do not attend any meeting!**

Remember that COVID exposure remains a serious issue and that we need to be constantly vigilant. If you plan to attend a branch event, please stay home if you feel ill or if you have been exposed to COVID or any other significant communicable disease. We encourage you to be considerate of everyone attending a function, some of whom might be more susceptible than others. If you have any doubts, test, wear a mask, and err on the side of caution.

While there are inherent risks in attending an in-person event, with your help we will do our best to keep everyone safe at our meetings.

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### **From the Editor** - *Joanne Quijano*

**Contribute to the Advocate** - Send ideas, articles, and pictures by the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month to appear in the next issue. Please use the [Submittal Form](#) on our website to direct your contribution to the Advocate, or other DAW social media, to our communications team.

Submissions should be in the following format:

- Articles in a .doc or .docx file, or in the body of an email
- Calibri font, size 12
- Pictures in .jpg format (compressed)
- Permissions set to enable editing

Find contact information about people mentioned in the Advocate on our [branch website](#) and in your directory. If you do not have a directory, [click here](#) to send us a request.

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### **From the Treasurer** – *Chris Ritter*

**Handle money matters here** - Please send expense vouchers or deposits to our AAUW mailbox at: P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507 for expedited processing. Refer to our branch website for specific forms and instructions – Click on [Members Page](#)

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### **From the Corresponding Secretary** - *Julie Grisham*

**Know someone who needs a note?** - Julie Grisham, our Corresponding Secretary, sends cards on behalf of our branch. If you know of an AAUW-DAW member in need of a get well, condolence or congratulations card, contact Julie via email [here](#).



## Our Wonderful Sponsors

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The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls.

**Mission:** AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

**Value Promise:** By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

**Vision:** AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.

The Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch promotes and supports our AAUW mission through local scholarships, AAUW program support, panel discussions, Tech Trek, AAUW Fund, and topical guest speakers.

Joanne Quijano, Editor  
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