



## February 2024 Advocate

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

### Third Thursday Member Meeting – February



#### Writing Diverse Stories

Thursday, February 15, 2024, 6:00 pm  
Danville Congregational Church

Join us in February for our Third Thursday Member Meeting! In addition to our usual social time, we are fortunate to have as our guest speaker one of the AAUW Fund Fellowship recipients, **K. X. Song**, speaking to us via Zoom. An accomplished author, she will touch 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.

#### Some next steps / actions to help, recommended by our speaker:

- Support marginalized authors by reading diverse literature, even if it's outside your typical genre or if it's from an author you've never heard of before. (Bonus: review your favorite books online on sites like Amazon or Goodreads!)
- Buy from independent bookstores or borrow and request books from your local library.

**K. X. Song** is an award-winning diaspora writer with roots in Hong Kong and Shanghai. Raised between cultures and languages, she enjoys telling stories that touch on collective memory, translation, and the shifting nature of memory and history. A Highlights Foundation Fellow and HG Wells Turnill Prize honoree, she has been awarded residencies at the Ragdale Foundation and the Anderson Center at Tower View. *An Echo in the City* is her debut novel, and her forthcoming novel, *The Night Ends with Fire*, will be released in Summer 2024 with Penguin Random House.

K.X. received her degree in Business Communications from UCLA and then was employed for four years with Meta. She is currently working on her MBA at Stanford funded through **AAUW's fellowship program**. You can visit her online at [kxsong.com](http://kxsong.com).

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## Co-Presidents' Messages

By Ogie Strogatz and Monika Witte, Co-Presidents

*From Monika* - Hi everyone, I hope you are staying dry and warm!

From my perspective, last week was a perfectly amazing week for DAW. On Tuesday, fourteen DAW members were visibly present at the SRVUSD school board meeting. Barbara Blalock and Ogie Strogatz gave thoughtful public comments; I was honored to be a part of the group. And then a few days later at our February DAW board meeting, we voted to include financial need and special circumstances (such as perhaps a first-generation college student) as additional considerations for our Local Scholarships.

We also voted to establish a named scholarship with the Diablo Valley College Foundation: *American Association of University Women, Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch, (AAUW DAW) Single Parent Scholarship*. A few days after that, on Saturday, a meeting at Rossmoor with a coalition of community group leaders from across Alameda and Contra Costa counties was organized by Public Policy Chair and AAUW California School Board Project Team member Laurinda Ochoa, Ogie, and others to develop a plan to protect public education. This impressive group is planning a summit for April 13. Please save the date and plan to attend. You'll hear more in the coming months.



Monika Witte



Ogie Strogatz

But for today, you might ask why supporting single parent families is a good idea for AAUW DAW. According to Annie E. Casey Foundation data<sup>1</sup>, in 2021 nearly 30% of single parents lived in poverty. Within single parent families, most children - 14.5 million - live in mother-only households. DAW will award one scholarship this year and perhaps expand in the years ahead.

We learned about the possibility of directing a portion of our Local Scholarship funds to a single parent scholarship from two contacts that our members have with members of other California AAUW branches. Ogie learned from the AAUW California DEI Chair, Charlene Goehring, that the AAUW Citrus Heights - American River Branch has a similar scholarship. Also, Chris Ritter told us about it when she researched the 501(c)(3) process, since we used some of the Citrus Heights - American River Branch's documents as examples for our own 501(c)(3) application.

I am proud of these results for Local Scholarships, and of the group that put the proposal together. Judy Lauper, Holly Sauer, Ogie Strogatz, Sarah Williams, Ann Willoughby, and I worked together for this gratifying outcome. I thank them and the DAW Board for their support. I am impressed and grateful for all the work that DAW members do in our community - with DAW, and also with other organizations.

Thank you all – Monika

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<sup>1</sup> Child Well-Being in Single Parent Families, <https://www.aecf.org/blog/child-well-being-in-single-parent-families>

From Ogie – Hi everyone,

I wish to acknowledge AAUW’s recognition of February as Black History Month. I just watched the [AAUW California webinar](#) about Mary Church Terrell (1863-1954), who became the first Black member of AAUW after winning an anti-discrimination lawsuit. The webinar featured Dr. Alison Parker, author of *Unceasing Militant: The Life of Marcy Church Terrell*. Terrell was the daughter of enslaved parents who earned her BA and MA from Oberlin College. She was an educator, a journalist, a founding member of the NAACP, and a fierce, prominent suffragist and civil rights activist.

AAUW also has highlighted [Brandeis University’s “Black Women as History Makers”](#) – a robust list of books and videos to help deepen our understanding.

No better time than these chilly mid-winter days to pursue inspired studies!

Ogie

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## February Checklist

- **February 13, DEI Meeting, 6:00 pm – “Around the Table”**  
to RSVP contact Ogie Strogatz at [ogstrogatz@gmail.com](mailto:ogstrogatz@gmail.com)
- **February 15, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting – Writing Diverse Stories**  
to RSVP – [click here](#)
- **February 20, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **March 5, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **March 21, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting – Education in the San Ramon Valley School District**  
Save the date!
- **April 2 and 3 – AAUW California Lobby Days**  
[Click here](#) for more information and to sign up  
Save the dates and plan to participate!
- **April 8, 4:30pm – 8:00pm – Gianni’s Fundraiser**  
Save the date and make your dinner reservation – [click here](#)
- Help support AAUW Funds when you buy See’s candy –  
[click here](#) to order your treats through the “DAW-AAUW Yum Yum Store”
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



## Third Thursday Member Meeting – March

### Education in the San Ramon Valley District: An Interview with Laura Bratt, SRVUSD School Board President

March 21, 2024, 6:30-7:30pm  
San Ramon Community Center – Terrace Room  
12501 Alcosta Boulevard, San Ramon

Instead of holding our usual Third Thursday Program, DAW branch members are invited to be guests of the San Ramon branch at their March program. Here's the teaser for this timely event from their program Co-VPs Cindy Alpert and Karen Rice.

This educational and inspirational program 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 Julka, local PTA leader, parent, and lawyer. Ravneet will ask Laura, in a relaxed, conversational setting, about the current climate in SRVUSD and to share information about public education issues in SRVUSD and beyond. We will learn what is occurring and how we can jump in to support efforts to continue to provide 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.

**Save the date!**



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## April Fundraising Event for Tech Trek

### ★ “Tips for Change” Fundraising Evening at Gianni’s Italian Bistro! ★

Plan ahead to join us at **Gianni’s Italian Bistro**, at 2065 San Ramon Blvd, San Ramon, on Monday, April 8, from 4:30 to 8:00 pm for a delicious Italian meal with a purpose! Your evening indulgence will support AAUW’s goals of increasing girls’/women’s interest in STEM careers.

Our organization will get 10% of Gianni’s food sales and ALL the tips that night; this money will go to help fund our branch’s Tech Trek students. Just make a reservation on Gianni’s website for the time you would like to dine. And if you can’t dine in, no problem! Take-out orders for pick up at the door will also be available.



As we partner with Gianni’s to raise funds, our own members will be the wait staff during the event. We need 7 energetic volunteers to help with the meal service that evening - no experience necessary! The training will be from 3:30 to 4:30 PM the day of the dinner. If you are interested in volunteering, please call Pat Morris at (925) 876-0481. Signups will also be taken at the February 15 Third Thursday meeting.

We need to come together as an organization on April 8th. Please invite your friends, relatives, and neighbors. All those people you have been meaning to get together with...this is the time and event! To see Gianni's menu and to make your reservation for April 8 – [click here](#).

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## Candy Fundraiser for AAUW National Fund

### A Sweet Way to Help DAW-AAUW Empower Women!

Since 1888, AAUW has been one of the largest funders of women's graduate education, investing in women who go on to change the world. Please [click here](#) to learn more about the many fellowships and grants awarded through AAUW Funds.

DAW is collaborating with See's Candies to open a "DAW-AAUW Yum Yum Store" for the online ordering of treats. Using the link below, you can place orders for shipment to family and friends anywhere, with a portion of each sale going to AAUW Funds. This spring promotion begins now and runs through March 15<sup>th</sup>.

To access the online store, [click here](#).



Thanks for your support!

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## Talkin' About Tech Trek!

*By Deborah Wechsler and Lee Garverick, Tech Trek Co-Chairs*

2024 Tech Trek planning is in full swing. We're working with our local science and math teachers and already have 7th grade girl nominees from several of our local middle schools! Meanwhile, we've secured their spots at Tech Trek camps in Fresno and either Sonoma State or Santa Clara University and are in close contact with camp organizers. Next steps are to select the girls who will attend and to wrap up fundraising.

**We seek volunteers to help interview the girls.** The commitment would be about four hours total as part of a school interview committee, divided between interview and selection efforts focused on three girl nominees from a single school. Interviewers who participated in the past felt it was a very rewarding and fun experience helping to guide a first "interview" experience for these promising future STEM professionals and help build their confidence.

**We seek your help in enlisting donations from local businesses** to raise the remaining funds needed to pay for the students' camps.

**Would you like to get involved?** Email either Lee or Deborah at [leegarverick@gmail.com](mailto:leegarverick@gmail.com) and [deborah.wechsler@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.wechsler@gmail.com).



Are you interested in donating directly to our Tech Trek program? Please [click here](#) for more information.

**What is Tech Trek, you ask?** Tech Trek is an exciting week-long summer camp for current seventh grade girls, designed to make STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields exciting and accessible to girls in middle school — the age when girls’ participation in these fields statistically drops. California AAUW runs these residential camps on several campuses in California alongside a virtual option. Tech Trek camperships are paid for through donations from the AAUW. To learn more about the Tech Trek program, see <https://www.aauw-ca.org/tech-trek/>. Tech Trek originated in California in 1998, inspiring nearly 15,000 girls over the past 26 years to get excited about STEM!

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## Branch T-shirts Are Here!

We’re so excited – branch members can now proudly identify as AAUW members in style! The shirts have already been on display as a group from DAW made their presence known at the January 30 San Ramon Valley School Board meeting.

If you ordered a shirt and haven’t yet picked it up, contact Monika Witte at [aauwmonikawitte@gmail.com](mailto:aauwmonikawitte@gmail.com).



Chris Ritter displaying a branch t-shirt

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## Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) In Our Branch

### The DEI Committee on Zoom: January 9 Meeting Highlights

At our January meeting, DEI Officer Teresa Cheung reported that the committee’s unanimous support for national AAUW to drop the degree requirement for membership has been shared with our Board. (All AAUW members across the country will have the opportunity to vote this spring on whether or not to maintain the degree requirement.)

Kathie Hixon provided an update about the April branch membership meeting that the Committee will host. Our program objective is to deepen knowledge and understanding about people who identify as transgender. Taylor denBroeder and Elisa Tinker, leaders of Danville/San Ramon PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will lead the presentation.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of DEI in the context of challenges facing local school boards. Public Policy Chair Laurinda Ochoa described her experience observing San Ramon Valley Unified School District Board meetings since 2022. Laurinda has served on the AAUW California School Board Project Team since its launch last July. She provided an overview of the Team’s work to support school board members who advocate for honest, inclusive public education statewide. Rebecca Radulovich, who retired after 34 years of teaching at Sunol Glen School, described persistent, heated dialogue among Sunol Glen School District Board members regarding the flying of the Pride flag. The controversy has culminated in a current effort to recall two of the three Board members.

## DEI Around the Table: February 13, 6:00 to 7:30pm

The February DEI Committee meeting will be in person at Teresa Roeder's home. All branch members are welcome to attend. The agenda: AAUW's national DEI Team will conduct its monthly Zoom from 4:00-5:00 pm that day, so we'll begin our evening meeting with a quick review of the national call, followed by takeaways from the most recent statewide DEI call, after which we'll discuss "The Future of Academic Freedom", an article by Harvard Law School professor Jeannie Suk Gersen, published in The New Yorker on January 27, 2024. We'll examine the DEI challenges posed by free speech constraints that are causing widespread turmoil on college campuses and contributing to high-profile resignations including that of Claudine Gay (an AAUW Fellowship recipient) as the first Black president of Harvard University.

To RSVP, please contact Ogie Strogatz (email: [ogstrogatz@gmail.com](mailto:ogstrogatz@gmail.com); mobile/text: 925-451-9359).

**We hope you'll join us on February 13<sup>th</sup>!**

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## AAUW California Public Policy Update

### 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 "Parents' 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)

### **Lobby Days Are Coming – April 2 and 3**

We encourage all members to participate! You should have received a registration form in your inbox mid-January. Please consider volunteering for the important role of team leader. The registration form will describe the key responsibilities. Also note that if you indicate willingness to meet with legislators outside of your own district, you may have the opportunity to team up with college student participants.

If you’re interested, be sure to sign up by February 15, and be ready to attend a virtual training session on March 25 at 7pm. [Click here](#) for more information and to sign up.

### **It’s A New Legislative Season—Get Ready to Take Action!**

In January and February, the Public Policy Committee will be hard at work evaluating new bills for our 2024 Legislative Agenda. The committee, in collaboration with our legislative advocate and coalition partners, will select and analyze proposed state-level legislation that reflects AAUW California’s Mission and [Public Policy Priorities](#). As the committee is working through the legislative review process in January and February, we invite you to reach out to let us know of any proposed California legislation that you think the committee should review. At the end of the review period, in early March, the committee will select 30 bills to prioritize. You will be able to review and follow these bills via our [online bill tracker](#), which will be updated for our 2024 agenda in mid-March. These bills will be the basis for our ongoing education and advocacy work throughout 2024.

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## DAW Public Policy Updates

### DAW Represents at the January SRVUSD Board Meeting



Fourteen DAW members attended the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) board meeting on January 30. Barbara Blalock and Ogie Strogatz each gave thoughtful, impactful comments to represent our branch during the evening. All the members there made a great impression with their presence and with our new branch T-shirts!

### Area AAUW Branch Reps Meet with Congressman DeSaulnier

Several DAW branch members and fellow Inter Branch Council members participated in an online meeting with Congressman Mark DeSaulnier on January 4. The meeting was organized and led by Asha Bajaj, our DAW liaison to the California Public Policy team.

The congressman has been a continuing champion of women’s health and reproductive rights. Asha encouraged him to support National AAUW priorities, in particular the passage of the ERA, the Family Act to create national paid family leave, and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Our Co-president, Ogie, gave him an overview of our branch’s monthly attendance at SRVUSD meetings and of the CA AAUW’s School Board Project. Other topics brought up were the issue of “parents’ rights” in education and CA AAUW’s Gov Trek program.



The Congressman was supportive of all our priorities and talked about his work as Chair of the Education Committee. On an interesting note, he mentioned his collaboration across the aisle with some very conservative Republican members of the Education Committee. He thanked us for all the advocacy and education we do as AAUW and mentioned that one of his mentors was a President of the Concord branch. He offered to stay in touch and bolster our efforts to support high-quality public education.

We had a very productive and informative meeting in just ½ hour.

## Notes from the January Third Thursday Meeting

### The Impact of Social Media on Girls: Challenges, Opportunities, and Support

We hope you were able to join the branch for our January 18 Third Thursday Member Meeting. We enjoyed an engaging presentation and group discussion led and facilitated by **Jamie Nuñez, Western Region Manager at Common Sense Media** on the challenges, opportunities, and ways to support girls affected by misuse of social media. We were a large group of parents, grandparents, educators, and administrators - our many branch members who attended as well as those who joined us from the greater community. Jamie helped us unpack the ever-changing, ever-present world of social media – how it impacts our children - especially girls!



Jamie Nuñez

There was much to discuss, and Jamie led the way with the latest research performed by Common Sense Media – the first of which was the impact of online interruptions, notifications, and pinging by our devices in our (and our children’s) daily lives. These can be constant interruptions from various sources/apps. The result of these interruptions and disruptions in our lives, and especially in developing brains, can be very unhealthy.

Second, Jamie shared the need for parents to understand the apps that their children use and understand platform features that can keep our children tied to their phones. Find out what your children use. Do some research. Note: Common Sense Media provides reviews of all types of media – they’re a great resource. Most important, work as a family unit to talk about use and agree on this together. What are the features the apps use to engage children? What motivators do the apps use to keep kids interested? Are these motivators healthy or unhealthy? What do the kids say about these things? Jamie encouraged us to

have conversations with our children. He shared several trending apps that are engaging youth today – some of which employ AI in their goal to find and keep new users and followers.

Third, the topic of privacy and protecting our children was high on attendees’ list of concerns regarding social media misuse. Jamie addressed this and the importance of making sure safeguards are in place to block unwanted contact of our children. Again, know the nature of the social media they use and have conversations within the family about the value of privacy and about ways to avoid ‘dangerous pitfalls’ that may impact young or naive users.

Finally, on a profound and celebratory note, Jamie and Ogie Strogatz reported on the recent passage of AB 1394 -actively supported by both Common Sense Media and our branch and state AAUW Public Policy units.

AB 1394 requires a court to award statutory damages between \$1 million and \$4 million for each act of commercial sexual exploitation that social media platforms “*knowingly facilitated, aided or abetted.*” Never before have social media mega-companies been held accountable for the impact of their products. It was great news and a positive way to end a lively and thought-provoking evening.



January Meeting Attendees

To learn more about Common Sense Media, its mission, research, and programs – [click here](#)

### **Jamie Nuñez – Western Region Manager at Common Sense Media**

Jamie serves as the Western Region Manager at Common Sense Media and supports school administrators, educators, students, and parents in addressing digital literacy skills. A former high school teacher, school administrator, and an education center director, Jamie addresses tech misuse through TED Talks on student identity in online spaces to statewide initiatives addressing digital literacy policies in schools.

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## **AAUW California News**

### **Emails, Oh Emails! Where Are You????**

*By Dawn Johnson, Director, Communication Committee Chair*

Yes, we know. Some of you have not been receiving emails from AAUW California. When we launched our new Branch Officer Reporting System in June, we also changed the way our monthly and group messages are delivered. For the past several months we've fine-tuned and tweaked the system. In December we invested in upgrading to a dedicated IP address and that seems to have solved the problem. Since we made that change, very few messages have been undeliverable. If you still can't find an email that you're expecting, please check your spam or junk folder. Way back in 2013 Gmail introduced new tabs such as promotions and social in your inbox to help organize your email. Sometimes our emails go there if you haven't disabled those folders. You can remove them following these simple YouTube [instructions](#).

### **Website Evolution**

*By Dawn Johnson, Director, Communication Committee Chair*

Nothing stays the same for long, including our California AAUW website. We're continually updating both the content and layout to give you a better experience and to help you find things. The Branch Tools and AAUW California Business pages have been given facelifts. Information has been reorganized and categorized. It's still a work in progress, but you'll be amazed at how much easier it is to find things. To check it out, [click here](#).

### **2024 Call for Candidates**

*By Deanna Arthur, Nominations and Election Chair*

AAUW California is looking for six enthusiastic, committed, and proven leaders to serve on the AAUW California Board of Directors. How about you, or is there someone you know with leadership talent? We seek candidates for:

- Secretary (two-year term 2024-2026)
- Four Directors (two-year terms 2024-2026)
- One Director (one-year term 2024-2025)

The committee members will be contacting branch presidents and others who have been suggested to the committee. Encourage members in your branch who might like to run for state office, or maybe you yourself would make a great candidate! For more information, including a link to the application, [click here](#).

## Donate to Gov Trek - Help Women Run & Win!

Thank you for your tax-deductible donations to the Gov Trek SPF fund at the state level. Your contributions as both individuals and branches will assist in providing prizes and Gov Trek merchandise to our future campaign competition winners.

- To make your donation by check, make payable to: "AAUW California SPF" and write Gov Trek in the memo field.  
Mail to: AAUW California Gov Trek, 729 Greenery Cir., Oceanside, CA 92057
- To make your donation online by PayPal, [click here](#)

Our heartfelt thanks for backing Gov Trek! With your help, we can inspire the next generation of women leaders to new heights.

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## AAUW National News

### Advancing Our Mission Through Respect and Inclusivity

AAUW and our members have been steadfast supporters and leaders of equity for women and girls since our inception. The valued members of our community have a shared interest in creating productive and impactful environments to advance our mission. As part of their engagement with AAUW, **all members are responsible for:**

- Promoting inclusion and equity for all, in line with AAUW's mission
- Staying informed and up-to-date
- Being respectful
- Voting on critical governance matters
- Paying dues and donating
- Committing to engage in AAUW's mission-based work

**Civility matters.** As we approach another vote on open membership, creating respectful, courteous, and inclusive environments is essential for us to achieve our mission, and AAUW members have a responsibility to demonstrate civility towards our collective AAUW community. More information on member responsibilities and why civility matters, authored by the member-led national AAUW Governance Committee, can be found on our [website](#).

### 2024 Annual Art Contest: Empowering Women in Art



"Sunset Glow in Winter", Caroline Sanchez

Starting February 5, AAUW members can begin casting votes on their favorite works. Winning entries will be featured in a series of notecards sent to all members in the spring.

Members may vote one time for their 10 favorite images. During the contest, you can log in and see which entries you've voted for. Rally votes for your favorites by sharing with other members!

As an example, Caroline Sanchez is one of our talented branch members who has entered her art in this year's contest. [Click here](#) for more about the contest and to how to vote.

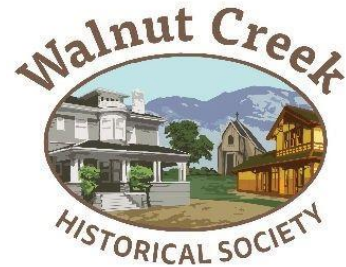
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## Branch Membership Corner

### Walnut Creek Downtown Historical Walk with the Art and Garden Interest Group

*By Tena Gallagher*

Join the **Art and Garden Interest Group** on February 15 at 9:15am to learn some fascinating background about Walnut Creek. This easy, 90-minute Downtown History Guided Walking Tour on city sidewalks brings to life the early times and development of what has become a Bay Area destination city. It's a new way to experience the city — and a perfect chance to spend a morning followed by lunch at True Kitchen and time to stay and enjoy all that downtown Walnut Creek has to offer. The Heritage Walk features some 60 sites — from Botelho's Island (now Broadway Plaza) to the Nuthouse (now the Lesher Center for the Arts). It involves walking approximately 5 city blocks.



Intrigued? Join us for the historical walking tour with lunch at True Kitchen!

The cost is \$5.00 per person, cash or check payable to Walnut Creek Historical Society. Contact Tena Gallagher for reservations and details at [mstena@gmail.com](mailto:mstena@gmail.com).

### Great Decisions Interest Group

*By Asha Bajaj, Great Decisions IG Leader*

Join us for stimulating conversations, thoughtful questions, and the ability to send your vote to shape future foreign policy decisions. The topics and briefing information we'll use are materials created by the Foreign Policy Association for their nationwide Great Decisions program. We will meet in person on Tuesdays from 7-9 pm at the Sycamore Homes Association Annex, 635 Old Orchard Dr. in Danville.

There will also be a virtual session on Mondays at 2 pm.

Please email Asha Bajaj for further details and to sign up for either day's sessions at [ashakiran@gmail.com](mailto:ashakiran@gmail.com).

For more information about the Foreign Policy Association and their Great Decisions program, [click here](#).

### Ladybug Neighborhood Group's Activity

*By Alicia Jones*

Hello Ladies,

It is time for another Ladybug neighborhood get-together. We will be meeting at Carol Highton's home in Alamo at 5pm on Monday, February 12. Please bring an appetizer and/or a bottle of wine or a drink of your choice. We are looking forward to meeting some of you who are new on the list as we always have fun chatting and noshing. Please RSVP to me at (925) 838-0422, so I can let Carol know how many are coming.

*Editors Note:* The Ladybug Neighborhood Group has continued to meet roughly quarterly in the last few years. Branch members are assigned to Neighborhood Groups based on their home address. Ladybug group members live in East Alamo and the Diablo area. If you're not sure of the group you belong to, check for the name under your email address in the latest Directory.

## “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 are preferred 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 at [juliegrisham@sbcglobal.net](mailto:juliegrisham@sbcglobal.net).

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**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  
AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch  
P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507

