

The Grapevine

December 2023

Volume 39, Number 4

President's Message

End-of-Year Donations

You should have received a letter in the mail, in October and a follow-up in November, from our local branch's AAUW Fund, signed by me, requesting an end-of-year donation. Here's what you should know about your donation:

- 100% of your local donation plus grants and monies raised by our fundraising efforts go toward our scholarship programs.
- Last year we received \$18,375 in donations from 30% of our members and a \$15,000 bequest from a former member.
- We awarded \$76,000 in scholarships (not including Tech Trek).
- The board has set a goal of receiving donations from at least 75% of our members. The increase in volume will make a BIG difference.
- Any amount is welcome. Thank you for supporting this worthwhile effort. Our scholarships do change lives.



Donations can be made by check to: Healdsburg AAUW Fund, PO Box 1064, Healdsburg, CA 95448
or online: [Healdsburg AAUW Donations Page](#)

Exciting News!

In response to last Spring's survey on how our members would like to meet more frequently, we will be starting the long-awaited "Speakers Series" in January. **Celeste Plaister** and **Michelle Regan** have lined up a list of interesting and entertaining speakers, which should keep us going into June. Our speaker in January will be Ariel Kelley, current mayor of Healdsburg.

"Speakers Series" Format:

- The meeting will be scheduled monthly, on the 2nd Monday of the month.
- It will be held at the Community Center in the Library/Community Room.
- Schedule
 - o 11:30-12:00 - Come for a brown bag lunch; we'll have time to connect with each other.
 - o 12:00 to 12:30 - We will hear from a speaker.
 - o 12:30 - 12:40 - There will be time for questions.
 - o 12:40 - 1:00 - Various board members will update us with Branch news.
 - o 1:00 - Meeting ends and the Board Meeting commences.

I'm looking forward to seeing you there!

Happy Holidays!

Laura Tredinnick



FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

Normalizing Safety: Gun Violence Prevention



January 28, 2024

2-4pm • Lucchesi Center
320 N McDowell Blvd, Petaluma

Join us in a program about guns in our community. Let's empower gun safety in Sonoma County, in our homes, in our schools and in our community.

Speakers

Featured Speakers*: Mike Thompson, Jared Huffman, US Congressional Representatives
Safety in our Community: John Maa, MD, FACS, San Francisco Marin Medical Society
Safety at Home: Heather Jennings, Moms Demand Action
Safety on our Streets: Brian Miller, Petaluma Police Deputy Chief
Safety at School: Dr. Amie Carter, SCOE & Dr. Louis Ganzler, School Culture/Safety
Safety in our Future: Mia Vaughn, Youth advocate & SRJC student



* Representatives' ability to be present may be impacted by the partial government shutdown deadline.

Join us on January 28, 2024
Child care will be available

AAUW recognizes that gun violence is a public health and safety crisis. This program is sponsored by Petaluma Branch of American Association of University Women along with co-sponsors AAUW Santa Rosa and AAUW Healdsburg.

For more information, contact AAUW Petaluma: Jean Reed, jjkreed3@gmail.com
Doris Tolks, doristolks@gmail.com • Teresa Barrett, teresa4petaluma@gmail.com



STEM



The New Tech Trek Alumnae Group (TTAG) is Out of This World!

Not all the stars were in the sky on October 14th when TTAG members gathered at the Robert Ferguson Observatory for an evening of food, fun and spectacular stargazing. Fourteen TTAGers “sparkled” with enthusiasm as they engaged in games estimating the relative size and distance of the solar system’s planets, followed by a stroll from the Sun to Jupiter on the self-guided Planet Walk. After sharing a very well-provisioned potluck meal, the girls were refueled and ready to view a beautifully curated slide show about the Solar System presented by our own AAUW member, **Mary Barsony**, PhD. The sky finally darkened and the bright lights throughout the observatory were dimmed to a red illumination. To our surprise, the daytime clouds had miraculously dissipated revealing a brilliant display of the Milky Way clearly visible with the naked eye. The stargazing event had finally reached its zenith as we peered through three world-class telescopes to see magnificently detailed views of Saturn’s rings and moons and a distant nebula. By the time we were ready to head home with a last look at the Milky Way overhead, the TTAGers were truly “twinkling” with excitement. What a delight to witness their energized fascination with the wonders of our universe!



TTAG is a student-led group of Tech Trek graduates who want to maintain a connection with other like-minded girls as they share their interest in STEM fields and develop leadership skills. With the guidance of AAUW advisors, all TTAG events are planned and led by the group’s officers and the event committee members.

Diane Meyers, TTAG Advisor



Mission Based Programs

Holiday School Supplies

Each year we ask for a \$10 voluntary donation from our members in order to help our schools purchase needed supplies. We deliver a check right before winter break to say thank you for all that they do for students in our community. If you would like to make a donation, please make a check to AAUW Healdsburg and write school supplies in memo section. Please mail the check to PO Box 1064, Healdsburg, CA 95448 no later than December 15 so that the checks can be delivered to the schools before winter break. You can also bring your check to the holiday party at Charlie’s on December 5.

Thank you!

Catherine Mock, Director of Mission Based Programs

Social Activities



SAVE THE DATE!

Please put it on your calendar NOW!

Healdsburg AAUW's

"Winter Wine 'N Dine"

Saturday, February 3, 2024

Watch for an eblast in early January!

Diane Burnley and **Cindy Powers**, Healdsburg AAUW Wine 'N Dine Chairs



Cultural Event January 18 Smart Train to Larkspur Landing Save the Date



Interested in taking the SMART Train, yet don't know the logistics? Join us on January 18 for a luncheon at Larkspur's Marin Country Mart - with a variety of restaurants from the Rustic Bakery, Farmshop, Hog Island Oysters or a new French bistro. Then, explore some interesting boutiques or take a guided walk to the Ferry and learn how to connect to San Francisco.

Logistics: Time commitment: 10 am to 4 pm

1. 9:45 am - Meet at City Hall to carpool: Drive to Airport SMART station
2. Clipper Cards - Purchase a Clipper Card, round trip fare or bring your card and "Add Fare" to cover trip.
3. Board the 10:22 am train to Larkspur: travel through Sonoma and Marin towns and see how close the train stops are to restaurants, shops, theaters - places you can meet friends without the stress of driving and parking.
4. Arrive Larkspur at 11:41 am: Take a guided walk to Larkspur Landing
5. Free time to eat, shop or walk to Ferry terminal: Gather at 2 pm meeting point to walk back to the train:
6. Catch the 2:23 train to Sonoma Airport - arriving at 3:38 pm

Hope to see you there.

Liz Loebel and **Judith Olney**, Co-chairs-Cultural Events

Meet Our New Member

Ann Elston



Ann was raised on a small farm near Algona, Iowa, built by her grandparents in 1918. Education was a high priority, so at 10 years old, she and her brother worked to save money for college. With scholarships, she graduated from Iowa State University in 1968 with a BS in textiles, clothing merchandising; she married her college sweetheart one year later. While her husband joined the Navy, she found her way to San Francisco in 1972, in advertising at Levi Strauss. Three years later, Ann left to attend USF to pursue a JD. Ann's career has been in law, initially as a law clerk and, after graduation, in civil litigation. Ultimately working with husband, Larry Lossing, since 1980 and then becoming the law firm of Lossing & Elston since 1983.

Currently Ann works part-time for one client, doing pro bono work, including the legal work to incorporate small nonprofits. She and Larry have owned a ranch west of Cloverdale for 31

years. Their life as weekenders consisted of travel from Sausalito (home), San Francisco (work) and the ranch. Today they live full-time on the ranch. The joy of country life, includes gardening, overseeing an apple orchard, involvement in local activities, and serving on the boards of La Familia Sana, Healthcare Foundation of Northern Sonoma, and AVFilm. Ann took up running at 63 and has run many races from 5k to marathons since then. She states "my marathon days are definitely over, and maybe my half marathon days too!" From 2001 through 2006 she spent part of each fall/winter in Agadez, Niger living with the Tuaregs. A subgroup of the Tuaregs make beautiful pure silver jewelry but they didn't have a market for it in the Sahara Desert. She sold the jewelry for them online, at festivals and markets such as the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market for many years. She and Larry loved trips into the desert where they didn't see anyone or anything other than their drivers and guides for days at a time. Sadly, it is no longer possible to return to their home there. Ann travels at least annually to the Iowa farm, Michigan, and to Europe, and is looking forward to her first trip to Guatemala next year.

Why AAUW: Her interest began with her mother's first cousin, Mary Grefe, who had the temerity to run a write-in campaign for national president of the organization in 1979. "I consider education so essential to everything that makes our society function well, so the concept of belonging to an organization that both supports education and provides it by the programs that stretch the mind is appealing."

Unexpected moment: While living a few months a year in Agadez, Niger spending her time almost exclusively with Africans, mostly Tuaregs. The unexpected was how readily a Caucasian woman was accepted and looked after by the community even though they did not share a common language. Ann describes "a vivid memory of walking out of an internet cafe one winter night and realizing that I had tarried too long. It was dark and I did not have a flashlight to guide me the mile or so home. There were no streetlights or even lights from houses. In fact, there were no real streets." She ultimately heard voices calling her name in a worried tone. A young boy ran out, took my hand and guided me to my house. The people all seemed to know the "blanc Tuareg" (their way of referring to her). Ultimately, Ann learned from them and how people can manage on very little when they know each other and share what they have. This experience changed her forever.

Advice for young women of today: Experience as many things as you possibly can by stretching yourself physically and mentally. Reach out beyond your immediate family and small circle of best friends to become part of the larger community by volunteering and becoming acquainted with people of all ages and backgrounds. Spend some time by yourself to think and get to know yourself and your dreams.

Scholarships

AAUW Al Garren Renewal Scholarship Awards



Two Sonoma County women, planning to graduate this academic year with degrees in Information Technology and Psychological Science, and Physics, are the recipients of our 2023 Al Garren Renewal Scholarships in the amount of \$4,000 each. The awardees are Jennifer Jennings and Cleo Lepart. Jennifer Jennings is majoring in Information Technology and Psychological Science at the University of Pennsylvania and Cleo Lepart is a Physics major at UC Berkeley.

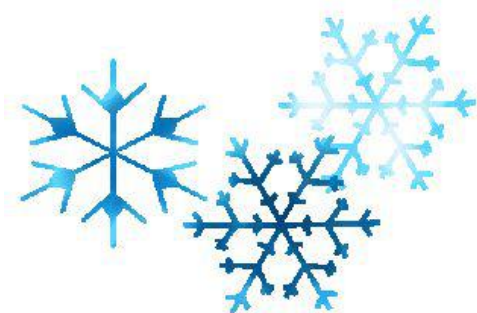
Our Al Garren Renewal Scholarships are intended to help previous recipients of our Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) Re-entry awards complete their degrees. They were made possible by the 2018 receipt of a \$250,000 donor-directed grant from the San Francisco Foundation's Al Garren Fund. The late Alper A. Garren was a brilliant, compassionate and widely-loved Northern California particle physicist who gave generously of his time and resources to provide educational opportunities to promising students. With this year's two new grants, we will have helped twenty-two local women attain their educational goals. Our recipients have overcome many challenges, often being the first in their families to attend college. Their studies and lives continue to have been affected by the pandemic.

Even with the obstacles presented by the pandemic and the demands of being full-time students, our awardees have persevered in their challenging fields of study and look forward to making a significant impact on the future of technology and scientific exploration. Both Jennifer Jennings and Cleo Lepart are STEM standouts. Jennifer Jennings intends to become a UX Engineer, which combines the skills of software engineering and UX design. She has always been intrigued by the nature of technology and the way humans interact with it. This past year, she earned an internship as a UX Design Manager and another internship as a Software Engineer. As a UX designer she will be able to create interfaces that enhance user satisfaction and their overall experience. As a UX engineer she will study the experience of the user to create new dynamics to improve the product. Similarly, Cleo Lepart is pursuing a science degree and intends to have a career in research within the field of physics. This past year she secured a summer internship with UC Santa Barbara's Quantum Foundry to explore the field of quantum computing research. She wants to pursue a graduate degree in physics and conduct cutting-edge research at the forefront of quantum computing.

Speaking on behalf of our Committee, one of the bright spots this year was to be able to award scholarships to such deserving women. Supporting women who seek to improve their lives and careers through education is what we stand for as AAUW members. We are sure our awardees will enrich the lives of all they encounter as they move forward in their careers.

Our Scholarship Committee includes **Cathy Chiminello, Sue Finan, Charlene Luks, Phil Wright** and myself. I thank them for their good service to our organization and to the women whose lives and futures we seek to improve.

Kay Kohler, Chair, Al Garren Scholarship Committee



Wishing you all a healthy and joyous holiday season.
Looking forward to seeing you in the new year.

Your Grapevine team, Kim Alexander, Carol Beattie, Kim
Brown, Judy Edmonds, Dyan Urban

Social Media Links. Make sure you are following AAUW Healdsburg on Facebook and Instagram. You'll find the most recent pictures and tidbits of info.



If you are aware of any member who is ill, has had an operation or an accident, has passed away or had a close family member pass away, please notify Holly Schatz so that a card can be sent from Healdsburg AAUW. Email: hollypschatz@gmail.com. Phone: 415-305-4559

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