



# The Grapevine

December 2024

Volume 40, Number 4

## President's Message

On November 8, 2024 the Healdsburg City Council voted to name the new Saggio Hills park development after 'culture bearer' Laura Fish Somersal (at right in photo). Laura Fish Somersal lived in northern Sonoma County and she was a renowned basket weaver as well as an expert on her indigenous language, Wappo.

“Naming the park after her celebrates her contributions and honors the significance of Native heritage in our community,” Council member Ariel Kelley told The Press Democrat. “Laura’s deep commitment to preserving traditional crafts, language and environmental stewardship aligns perfectly with the values we want to uphold in this new park.”

**Nancy Jane Andrews**  
Healdsburg AAUW, President



On Monday November 4, we had the largest turnout ever when 22 AAUW members were treated to a gorgeous fall hike at the old Foppiano Ranch along the Russian River, east of Healdsburg. Monday hike leader **Nancy Casey** coordinated the hike with Ingrid Stearns of the Sonoma Land Trust, that holds a conservation easement on the 758-acre property. In addition to fantastic views of vineyards and mountains, we were greeted by a pair of friendly Percheron horses and watched galloping cows “moooove” to a feeding area. What a wonderful day!

**Nancy Casey**



### Future Prep Committee

Future Prep is AAUW's program at Healdsburg High School to help students explore career choices and understand the pathway, education, and life skills necessary to attain that career. On November 12, the Future Prep Committee (consisting of **Betsy Hafner** and **Pam Jones**) held a panel of six people who have different types of engineering careers. Two engineering classes and other interested students participated in the panel. All students seemed very engaged.

**Catherine Mock**, Mission Based Programs Director



## Holiday Gifts for Teachers

Dear AAUW Members,

It is time for our annual Holiday Gifts for Teachers program. This year, we are adding Mattie Washburn Elementary School in Windsor since Reading Rocks began there last year. Because we have an additional school, we are hoping that our members will donate \$20 if they wish. Checks will be delivered to the elementary schools in Healdsburg Unified and West Side as well as Mattie Washburn so the teachers can purchase school supplies that they need. There are two ways to donate:



- Bring \$20 or more if you wish to the Holiday Party.
- Send a check made out to AAUW Healdsburg and indicate that it is for the Holiday Gifts by December 15.

P.O. Box 1064

Healdsburg, CA 95448

As a former elementary school principal in Healdsburg, I found that receiving new supplies was so helpful to our staff and much appreciated. Thanks in advance for your generosity.

**Beth Wolk**, Holiday Gifts to Teachers Chair



STEM

Over 400 years after Galileo's first glimpse of the stars through a telescope, the Healdsburg Tech Trek Alumni Group (TTAG) discovered the power of the Galileoscope to explore worlds beyond the reach of the naked eye. This compact refractor telescope, developed in 2009 for the International Year of Astronomy, was designed to ignite public interest in astronomy and the sciences.

On November 9, astrophysicist and AAUW Healdsburg member **Dr. Mary Barsony** led a hands-on workshop at the Cloverdale Library, where she guided TTAGers in assembling, disassembling, and focusing their Galileoscopes. Dr. Barsony enriched the experience with captivating facts and stories about astronomy—one of humanity's oldest sciences. For the past two years, she has led this workshop at Tech Trek, inspiring young students to embrace science and exploration.

TTAG is a student-led group of Tech Trek graduates dedicated to building connections with other like-minded girls, fostering shared interests in STEM, and developing leadership skills. With the support of AAUW advisors, all TTAG events are planned and led by the group's officers and event committee members, making each experience a true student-driven success.

**Karla Rosen** and **Diane Meyers**

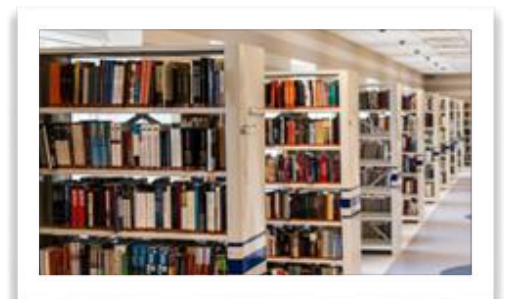
**AAUW Speaker Series – Monday, December 9**  
*Sonoma County Healdsburg Regional Library*



Have you been looking for a good book to read? Discover what the Healdsburg Library has to offer you. Our December 9th program features 3 local librarians who will welcome you to the library and provide you with a range of services and resources.

Speakers/Topics include:

- Barbara Maes, Division Manager: history and overview of the Sonoma County Library system.
- Jon Haupt and Charity Anderson, local librarians: Updates on special projects.
  - Ongoing Healdsburg Library Building Modernization Project—what's happening, when it's re-opening, what's in the future.
  - Take Time to Read—special project spreading the joy of reading in our community through monthly family get-togethers with story times, reading, book giveaways, and sharing a meal together.
  - Book Buddies—companion project pairing up teen volunteers with young elementary-age children at Healdsburg Elementary School for after-school reading time together.
  - Ongoing four-year initiative to connect our community through books and **getting out into nature**; how it is making a difference in the quality of life for our community .



Monday December 9, 11:30 to 1:00 pm  
Healdsburg Community Center, 1557 Healdsburg Avenue

Bring your own “brown bag” lunch if you like. The presentation will begin at noon, followed by a brief update on AAUW chapter activities.

**We encourage you to bring guests! Join us!**

**Michelle Regan**, Speaker Series Chair

## Fall Wine 'N Dine

Our Healdsburg AAUW Fall Wine 'N Dine, the first of our get-togethers for 2024-2025, was held on Saturday, October 19. Four Healdsburg AAUW members hosted, inviting AAUW guests into their homes. Our hosts who so generously shared their homes for this event included AAUW members **Neita Comings, Charlene Luks, Carol Callaghan, and Mary Newman.**

The hosts organized the dinners, including selecting the menus and coordinating the courses with the guests. Those attending enjoyed not only spending some time getting to know one another but also having interesting and fun conversations on a beautiful fall evening in Healdsburg. It was apparent this was a successful event when we heard from quite a few of the participants. Here is only one of the positive comments: "I thoroughly enjoyed the evening, getting to know you and your delightful spouses. The conversation was so engaging!" Here are some great photos from the gatherings.

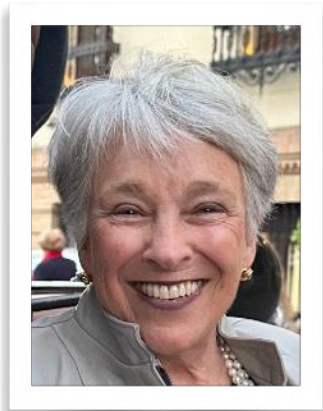


Don't miss out next time, when we hold this event on **Saturday, February 1!**

**Cindy Powers and Judy Edmonds, Wine 'N Dine Co-chairs**

## Meet Our New Members

### Leslie Moreland



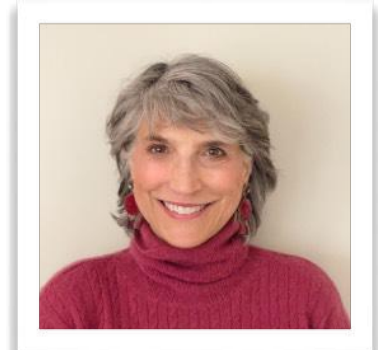
Leslie graduated from the University of Denver with a degree in Political Science/Economics, taking a break for five years before completing a Masters in Business at the University of Utah. She spent the last 35 years of her career running small businesses. Her most rewarding and favorite time was working with mid-career adults on planning successful career transitions.

As a new Enso Village resident, Leslie joined AAUW to become a fully involved citizen of Healdsburg. She is clear that her past business acumen and Tech Trek are great fits along with the hiking and bridge groups.

**What would you tell young women of today?** A wise author of a book entitled “What Color is my Parachute” who says “There are too many people on God’s green earth who hate their work to add any more.” As women, it is very important to find our passion and pursue our goals.

### Holly Christman MD

Holly is originally from Pittsburgh, PA, attended Oberlin College (Ohio) and moved to California to attend medical school at UCSF. She became a dermatologist and Mohs surgeon (skin cancer surgery) and practiced in the Bay Area including San Francisco, Sausalito, Santa Rosa, and Healdsburg. She continues to perform surgery on occasion in Healdsburg. Her entrée into AAUW began through the Friday hiking group as she loves being outdoors. She is a dedicated “Italophile”, studying the language, art, culture and traveling there as often as possible.



**What would you tell young women of today?** Holly’s consistent message to all her trainees- “You can have ANYTHING you want; you just can’t have EVERYTHING!” For young people (she has both a son and a daughter), find a good supportive partner, one who is competent, responsible, and can help share the everyday tasks of life as well as the challenges - as there will be many.

## AAUW Al Garren Scholarship Awards

Three Sonoma County women are the recipients of our 2024 Al Garren Scholarships in the amount of \$4,000 each. The awardees are Katherine Brashear, Darlene DuCharme, and Maria Navarro. Katherine Brashear is majoring in Psychology at Sonoma State University; Darlene DuCharme is majoring in Cinema and Broadcast Electronic Communication Arts at San Francisco State University; Maria Navarro is a Psychology major at UC Berkeley.



Healdsburg AAUW offers two types of scholarships for eligible Santa Rosa Junior College graduates who have been accepted at a four-year college or university. Our first scholarship, the Healdsburg AAUW Re-Entry Scholarship, is for the third year. Our second scholarship, the Healdsburg AAUW Al Garren Scholarship, is intended to help previous recipients of our Re-Entry awards with expenses in their fourth year. The Al Garren awards 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 three new grants, we will have helped twenty-five local women attain their educational goals.

Our recipients have overcome many challenges, often being the first in their families to attend college. Even with all the demands of being full-time students, our awardees have persevered in their challenging fields of study and look forward to making a positive impact on this world. Katherine Brashear wants to use her degree in psychology to pursue a career as a relationship coach or therapist to help others. Darlene DuCharme intends to use her degrees in cinema and broadcast communication arts to write, direct, shoot, produce and/or edit stories she believes need to be heard and to bring hope and inspiration to others. Maria Navarro wants to become an educator and obtain a Master's degree and teaching credential. She plans on using her background as an immigrant from a Spanish-speaking country to promote the benefits of bilingualism and the diversification of education.

Speaking on behalf of our committee, one of the bright spots of this year was to be able to award scholarships to such deserving women. Supporting our grantees who seek to improve their lives and careers through education is what we stand for as AAUW members. We are sure these women 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**, and myself. I thank them for their good service to our organization and to the women whose lives and futures we seek to improve. Special thanks to AAUW member **Phil Wright** for all his help and thoughtful insights these past years as a member of both our Re-Entry Committee and Al Garren Committee.

**Kay Kohler**, Chair  
Al Garren Scholarship Committee



### In Memoriam

As we end 2024, we remember three of our members who passed away this year. They each contributed to our AAUW Healdsburg mission and were valued members of our community.

Candace (Candy) Danhausen  
Charlotte (Shally) Schultz  
Leila (Lee) Sigler

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](#) and [Kim Alexander](#) so that a card can be sent from Healdsburg AAUW and communicate as appropriate. Email: [hollypschatz@gmail.com](mailto:hollypschatz@gmail.com). Phone: 415-305-4559 and [kimeliza28@yahoo.com](mailto:kimeliza28@yahoo.com) 607-342-7658.

Published monthly, except in July and August. Please submit articles and announcements in email text, Google Docs, Pages or Word and images in .jpeg by the 15th of the month prior to the issue in which you want them included. The Grapevine is available to the general public, therefore please be cautious about including personal information. Send articles to Kim Brown: [krb.jlb@gmail.com](mailto:krb.jlb@gmail.com).