



## **Branch Annual Meeting**

**March 21-28, 2022**

This meeting was held online through our email program list

### **State of the Branch:**

Shelley Mitchell, Branch President: Hello, I am Shelley Mitchell, President of the AAUW CA Online branch. In general, our branch is doing well. We were not as affected by the COVID epidemic as drastically as many other branches. We are healthy financially and have gained new members. We had some great programs, started a few new things like interest groups and monthly happy hours, we had a speech trek contest and, in general, are a lively and engaged group.

### **Membership Report-2021-2022**

#### **A. Members and Membership List**

Monthly membership updates are provided in the Onliner Newsletter.

We have 77 members. Because of the updates to the AAUW Membership Services Database, we have a temporary branch membership list on the branch website. This list will be updated to include the personal information you want to share. [This action is a result of CCPA (California Consumer Protection Act) that went into effect January, 2020. ] The newsletter will include the link to the Google Form. There is only **one** submission. If you already submitted, you will get a response stating such. You can make a copy for your own records. **Please submit before May 1st.**

#### **B. Happy Hours/Meet and Greet Information**

At this writing, we completed seven Happy Hours/Meet and Greets from September 7th to March 10. Attendance at Happy Hours averaged 11 participants [members and guests] with a total of 31 different participants. There are nine 'regular' participants who attended three or more Happy Hours. Thanks to those of you who participated in these Happy Hours and invited others. Your engagement and commitment to the branch is appreciated.

#### **C. Interest Groups**

Because of members' responses to the summer board survey of 2021, there was interest in starting three interest groups. There were three creative volunteers who took on the lead role for each group.

Public Policy Interest Group---usually meets the third Thursday of the month at 7PM and has been under the able leadership of Wendy Levine. Topics included abortion, the Texas abortion law, lack of female representation in drug studies, and CRT [Critical Race Theory].

Tech Interest Group—meets the first Monday of the month at 4PM. This group started off with the organized tech skills of Tech Guru--Sandi Gabe and her leadership. Topics included Zoom, using iPad and iPhone, ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act] and its online effects, Excel. Topics left to cover include: Snagit, Ablebits, creating strong passwords, and Phonevite. Book Club Interest Group—meets the fourth Monday of the month at 7PM. This group was under the experienced leadership of Harriet Tower whose love of books and discussions helped steer the group. The books included *Giver of Stars*, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, *Dark Money*,

We want to thank Wendy, Sandi and Harriet for their contributions and efforts in getting these groups off the ground and helping to provide more opportunities for members to participate. The chairs of each interest group volunteered for one year. There are chair vacancies for the Tech and Public Policy Interest Groups for next year. If you are interested in taking a leadership/chair position for one of these interest groups, please let me know.

Submitted by  
Beverly Van Citters, VP Membership

## **Program Report**

We strive to hold at least one program each quarter of our year. Programs are listed below by quarter.

First Quarter: Email discussion of the book “Caste,” by Isabel Wilkerson. Because the book was written in seven parts, our discussion of the book lasted for seven weeks. I think most will agree that the emails were most interesting and educational. We started in August and ended in September.

Second Quarter: Zoom presentation by the Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) State Committee. The call was attended by Branch members, and it was also recorded. The recording was then emailed to all members of the Branch.

Third Quarter: Speech Trek competition. There were six contestants from various communities, the coach is Cathy Foxhoven from our Branch and this year the judges were from our Branch. The winner will go on to compete at the State level.

Fourth Quarter: The plan is to hold a presentation on the status of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in May. Details will be forthcoming.

Gail Swain

## **Finance:**

Hello. My name is Jean Simutis. I’m currently in my second year as treasurer of the CA Online Branch. I’ve been a member of the CA Online Branch for at least 15 years. I’m happy to serve you. You will be hearing from Bev and me when it is time to renew your membership.

Our financial reports are compiled quarterly and published on the branch website, in the Members Only section. You can find the second quarter report now, at

<https://ca-online.aauw.net/files/2022/01/Q2-report-21-22.pdf>

The third quarter report will be posted in a few weeks, after the board has approved it.

The annual financial review is done during July or August. The review report for 2020-2021 is posted on the branch website.

Our branch is in good financial shape because our expenses during Covid have been reduced. When things return to normal, we may need to increase our spending to serve the branch members, and therefore our income. The incoming board will make those decisions.

## **Nominating Committee Report and Presentation of Slate of Officers: Bev Van Citters and Cathy Foxhoven**

Madame President and Branch Members:

The Nominating Committee, Cathy Foxhoven and Bev Van Citters, are pleased to present the following slate of officers for 2022-2023.

- President---Gail Swain
- Co-VP Programs-- Jean Simutis and Bev Van Citters
- Membership VP—Tobi Balma
- VP Funds-- Charlene Goehring
- Treasurer—Kristina Rueckert

Submitted by Nominating Committee  
Cathy Foxhoven and Bev Van Citters

## **Introduction to the bylaw and policy changes proposed (bylaw and policy committee**

The bylaws committee (Sue Cochran, Gail Swain, and I) did an extensive review of the branch bylaws beginning months ago. The result was to amend the bylaws that have been posted (as noted in the March newsletter) on the branch website.

Just FYI... the first seven articles of the bylaws are mandated by national AAUW – all affiliate organizations (branches and state organizations) are required to have that language. So it isn't until Article VIII that the branch can set the rules that govern how our branch does business. The motions to amend the bylaws are shown on the branch website article by article, but it might also be helpful for you to know which motions are for clarification and which represent an actual change in our governance.

### **MOTIONS THAT CHANGE THINGS:**

Motion #6 (Article IX. Nominations and Election, Section 1-a) prohibits the president from serving on the nominating committee. Best practices.

Motion #7 (Article X. Officers, Section 1-b) adds two new appointed officers to the board, the chairs for public policy and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). There are currently 5 elected officers (president, treasurer, and VPs for Program, Membership and AAUW Funds) and one appointed officer (communications chair).

Motion #9 (Article X. Officers, Section 1-e) required that an officer vacancy be filled within 30 days rather than the current 60 days.

Motion #10 (Article X. Officers, Section 2-b) states the president is the official signer of all legal documents. This isn't so much a change as something that is generally recognized to be the case but has never been explicitly stated in our governing documents.

Motion #11 (Article X. Officers, Section 2-d) changes the need for a "secretary" to instead require minutes be recorded and posted. This is not really a change in how we do business as much as a more accurate description of how the responsibility for minutes is handled.

Motion #12 (Article XI. Branch Board of Directors, Section 3) requires at least one board meeting per year. Most board business is conducted by email, but this requires at least one meeting. (For the past few years, the board has typically held two Zoom meetings/year.)

Motions #13 & #16 explain that board and branch meetings may be held by electronic means, rather than in person.

Motion #15 (Article XIV. Branch Business, Section 4) adds a requirement for an annual general membership meeting, something we've never done before this year. We're doing it by program email list right now, but future boards can conduct the annual meeting either by email list discussion or scheduled Zoom meeting.

**MOTIONS THAT CLARIFY WITHOUT CHANGING THINGS:** Motions 1-5, 8, 14, 17  
Each motion is accompanied by a written rationale, but if you have questions about any of them, we welcome your questions. The vote on these motions will take place next week, at the same time we elect the 2022-23 branch officers.

Sandy Kirkpatrick, Bylaws Committee

## **AAUW Fund Report:**

### **BRANCH GIVING**

Hello! I am Harriet Tower, your branch AAUW Fund VP, and I am proud to present my report to such a generous branch!

Contributions credited to the branch for 2021 **are reported as \$6564**. We discovered that some contributions had not been credited, and this is the new total. If you think your contribution might not have been credited to our branch, contact me and I will look into it for you.

Thanks again for your outstanding generosity!

### **DONOR CERTIFICATES**

I have some certificates to present to branch members whose 2021 contributions of \$100 or more were credited to our branch. PDF copies of the certificates are attached.

Leaders Circle – Shaila Rao Mistry

Equity Circle – Sharon Westafer  
Associates Circle

Sue Cochran  
Nancy Turner  
Krys Wulff

Sustaining Circle – Judy Horan  
Century Club – Harriet Tower

Congratulations to all!

In addition to everything else our branch does well, we work to sustain AAUW with our generous giving.

### **NAMED GIFT HONOREE**

Our choice for this award has been President of AAUW California and the AAUW CA Special Projects Fund (SPF). She has held several positions on the state board since the 1980s.

Migrating to California in the early 70's from Washington state, she and her husband currently live in Santa Rosa. She has been a member of AAUW for 50 years and always active in her branch, serving as president of Santa Rosa Branch twice.

For our branch, she has most recently served on the committee reviewing the governance documents.

She has served AAUW National on the Bylaws Committee and chaired the committee, on the Program Development Committee, and most recently on the National Governance Committee.

Her education background includes degrees in Food Science and Nutrition, and Communications/Journalism from Washington State University, and graduate work in Business Administration, and Meeting Facilitation and Planning from Sonoma State University and San Francisco State University. She has used her education throughout her diverse career and volunteer roles.

In her spare time, she enjoys reading, quilting, needlepoint, and knitting. She and her husband pursue genealogy research and love to travel. She is also a certified meeting planner.

If you haven't already guessed, our Named Gift Honoree is . . . SUE COCHRAN

### **Communications Report:**

Although in most AAUW branches it's the communications team that is responsible for the newsletter, I wanted everyone to know that the wonderful monthly newsletters you receive are entirely the work of our president, Shelley Mitchell (with articles contributed by others, of course, but she does all the work of putting it together and getting it delivered to you). Kudos to Shelley!

I want to thank two members of the communications team who have helped for a number of years with the following tasks:

**Hayley Green** is our email list administrator. She's the one who subscribes people to lists, unsubscribes them upon request, and makes new lists as new interest groups arise that want their own discussion list.

**Alice Labay** handles website updates, promptly posting new materials and edits as board members send them to her.

Many thanks to them both!

We recently added a new feature on the home page of our branch website that many of you may find helpful: A calendar of upcoming events. This calendar includes branch events, state (AAUW CA) events, national AAUW webinars, and Tech Trek camp dates.

We also have two Facebook groups. One is the public FaceBook group includes many people who are not dues-paying members of the branch. In fact, some of them are likely not members of AAUW. The group is designed to share articles and links that delve into AAUW mission topics that interest us all and that provide outreach to those not yet familiar with AAUW. If you are a member of that group, please feel free to post. And if you aren't comfortable posting, be sure to "LIKE" or comment on posts that you find meaningful.

The other Facebook group is a private Member Connections Group posts are only visible to our branch members. It was originally created a few years ago to experiment with using it as a program platform (instead of email list), but we re-named it and are re-purposing it as a way for our members to get to know each other on a more personal level. If you haven't yet checked it out and responded to the questions posted there, if you use Facebook we hope you will. If you need the links, please contact any board member.

Sandy Kirkpatrick, Communications Chair

## **SPEECH TREK REPORT**

California Online is so pleased to have had 6 participants in Speech Trek this year from all over the State. We also had three board members judge the contest which is a big change. In the past, judges were not able to be AAUW members. Rather it was encouraged to invite community leaders to judge.

All six students passionately argued if " the United States has lived up to its liberty & justice for all?" 1st place winner, Cecilia Choy took a unique approach to the topic and spoke about the injustices in the school system in regards to her autistic brother. The semi-finals will be on April 1st and we hope that Cecilia will place in the finals. Many of the participants are planning on competing again this coming year!

Cathy Foxhoven  
Speech Trek Coordinator

## **DEI (Diversity/Equity/Inclusion) COORDINATOR**

The State DEI team has been busy formalizing the role of the DEI Coordinators that includes having a detailed job description. It will contain an orientation/training as part of their responsibilities. The training session would be held via Zoom and recorded for future use in the branches. California Online is exploring the possibility of developing a DEI interest group in the new year that will meet once a month with lively discussions about the many aspects of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Cathy Foxhoven  
DEI Coordinator

## **AAUW CA Update**

This is Sandi Gabe, your incoming AAUW California President for 2022-2024. I'm looking forward to our upcoming Lobby Week, AAUW Adventureland Annual Event and planning for 2022-2024!

The public policy committee has polished the concept of lobby day and made it sparkle into a bigger and better event stretching to a whole week (April 11 – 15). They're even doing the hard lifting of organizing meetings with legislators and preparing materials to support the discussions – a welcome gift for those who want to be involved but may not have the time to dig into all the issues about which AAUW cares. You can participate in the training session if you want to learn about the bills we're supporting – even if you're not participating in Lobby week.

What will 2022 bring? What the board look like? What will be our direction? Those are great questions. It's premature for me to outline the answers to those questions because where we go and how we get there will be the result of a partnership of visions. While I have ideas that I'd like to pursue such as expanded membership growth, development of a mentoring program and creation of an additional state project; tapping into the passions of the elected board members is paramount to ensure we have creativity and motivation working in our favor.

Once the board members have been elected, we'll meet June 24 – 26<sup>th</sup> to begin getting to know each other and to begin to sketch out our success plan for the coming year. Then....I can share our direction. Stay tuned!