



**Minutes of the California Online Branch
Board Zoom Meeting
August 13, 2024**

Branch Established October 2, 2001

Attendance:

Gail Swain, President

Shelley Mitchell, Finance

Elaine Johnson, Program VP

Randa Blanding, Communications Chair, Website, Tech Trek

Kathi Harper, Public Policy

Cathy Foxhoven, Program, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Speech Trek

Sharon Westafer, Secretary

Total attendance: Seven

Gail welcomed members and asked each person's favorite color of red.

Meeting called to order by Gail at 7:06 P.M.

Program: Cathy is waiting to hear back from two Marin County NCCWSL attendees. Four students have been invited to speak about their NCCWSL experiences at the September 17 meeting. The Oregon Online branch is doing the program and sharing it with us. Kathi Harper will work with Cathy on a public policy program. Cathy is also hoping to do a program on climate change.

Speech Trek: Cathy will conduct the program for one more year as the money in the account must be spent. The AAUW CA board of directors voted last spring to discontinue the program after that. The current Speech Trek fund is \$19,000.00. Cathy and her committee, Marilyn Cain and Judy Steele, plan to award \$2,500 to the First-place winner, \$2,000 to the Second-place winner, \$1,000 to the Third-place winner and \$500 for honorable mention. The committee will be putting together a grant to help branches conduct their speech contests. They will award \$500 to the sixteen branches that participated last year and \$400 to any new branches that wish to participate. Any remaining money would be given to Tech Trek for a workshop that includes a speech component. All plans would be based on approval from the donor who contributed the money for Speech Trek.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): Cathy reported that the first program, on October 7th, will be about hate groups throughout the United States. Another program will feature a young man speaking about gender equity. Cathy is also hoping to have a program including Black women speaking about how they feel about how they're treated.

Financials: Shelley is working on updating the finances. She received the bill for our insurance, and it is significantly higher than last year. The premium is based on per capita membership. Based on the increase, she will be revising the proposed budget for 2024-2025, as well as the fourth quarter budget. Shelley has been working with a banker to have Jean Simutis removed from the account.

MOTION: Gail Swain moved that Shelley Mitchell be appointed treasurer of the Online branch. Seconded by Elaine Johnson; motion carried.

Membership: Elaine reported that there are 105 branch members. Seventeen are Life members, of which five are honorary Life members, and thirteen are paid Life members. Discussion occurred regarding charging Life members for branch dues.

MOTION: Kathi Harper moved to make branch dues optional for honorary Life members. Randa seconded; motion carried.

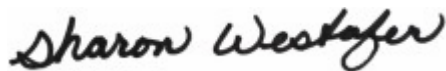
Elaine thanked Gail and Randa for the new members' welcome letter. Elaine will remind new members to attend the monthly meet and greets. Elaine is working to clear up an issue of a new member having two ID numbers.

Public Policy: Kathi discussed the 5-Star program sponsored by AAUW National. Gail's goal is to earn 5-Star status for the branch this year. Gail asked that Kathi do a monthly newsletter article and quarterly meetings. Kathi reported that as long as people don't mention Donald Trump, they are free to discuss aspects of Project 2025 and AAUW goals and priorities. Kathi will include news from National, State and branch in her newsletter articles.

Tech Trek: Randa reported that three girls attended the Virtual camp this year. Mary Isaac provided money for two and Alice Apkarian funded one. There is \$100 in the branch treasury and \$500 in the Virtual treasury for the branch. Sharon will be sure the \$500 is in the Virtual account.

Announcements: Jean Simutis' funeral services will be listed in the September branch newsletter. Gail reminded board members to check the website to be sure information pertaining to their role is correct. Randa will be sending out the Branch Buzz, an email used to send out information to members between newsletters if the information needs to be sent before the next newsletter.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m. **Next Board Meeting October 15, 7 P.M.**



Sharon Westafer, Secretary