

AAUW Poway Penasquitos Affiliate

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Don't miss these February events & announcements:

- February 1: Discuss Mideast Realignment with Great Decisions
- February 3: Speech Trek Competition
- February 14: February General Meeting
- February 24: Visit Bastien's Vineyard with Grape Expectations

President's Message by Michelle Blasberg

Welcome to Black History Month.

Did you know?

- The NAACP was founded on February 12, 1909, the centennial anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.
- In the decades that followed, mayors of cities across the country began issuing yearly proclamations recognizing "Negro History Week." By the late 1960s, thanks in part to the civil rights movement and a growing awareness of Black identity, "Negro History Week" had evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses.
- President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." Today, Black History Month is a time to honor the contributions and legacy of African Americans across U.S. history and society—from activists and civil rights pioneers such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and Rosa Parks to leaders in industry, politics, science, culture and more.

Black History Month 2024 Theme

Since the mid-1970s, U.S. presidents have issued proclamations supporting the Association for the Study of African American Life and History's themes to celebrate African Americans' many achievements,

culture and history. The 2024 theme is "African Americans and the Arts" spanning the many impacts Black Americans have had on visual arts, music, cultural movements, and more. (Courtesy of: Natural History Museum of African American History and Culture)

Here are the important happenings for our affiliate:

- **Speech Trek** – The competition is set for February 3 at the Rancho Penasquitos Library. If you'd like to help or just to attend, please reach out to Karen McGurk.
- **Cover to Cover 2024** –
 - Mark your calendar for **Saturday May 11 at The Heights Golf Club in Rancho Bernardo**
 - Things are moving forward for this year's event. Contact Cathy Burciaga if you'd like to help.
- **Membership** – Our Membership continues to grow with two new members in January. Please continue to bring guests, friends, and relatives to our meetings as you are our best advocates for AAUW.
- **Nominating Committee** – We are still in search of a few great women (who needs good men, haha). None of the positions take a great deal of time and you will get a chance to work with great members. If you would like to help lead our dynamic organization, please reach out to Joan Thompson, or Harriet Gerza.

February General Meeting: *Beyond the Stars and the Names You Already Know!*

by Joie Nolasco

At our luncheon meeting on Wednesday, February 14 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., we will explore women astronauts with Dr. Neil Farber, MD, NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador, and Docent for the San Diego Air & Space Museum. While we are familiar with the names of Sally Ride, Mae Jemison, Ellen Ochoa, and Christa McAuliffe, what about the second woman in space, Judith Resnick? There actually have been 73 women in space, and 56 are from the United States! Join us at Eastview Community Center, 17520 Drayton Hall Way, to blast off the New Year with a very informative program celebrating women in space.

Speech Trek Prepares for February 3 Competition by Karen McGurk

The Speech Trek competition will be held on Saturday, February 3 at 10 a.m. at the Rancho Peñasquitos Public Library. This year's topic is: *How can we ensure a robust public school curriculum that is accessible to all and teaches historically accurate information?*

It is sure to be an exciting competition with eight registered students. Please join us to listen to the well-articulated thoughts and ideas of our local high school students. This is an open meeting, and friends and family members are welcome to attend. Questions? Contact Karen McGurk at aauboard@gmail.com and please add Speech Trek to the Subject Line.



Finance Report by Sheila Walker

You outdid yourselves in your generosity to the Fall Campaign for our philanthropic projects! THANK YOU.

Here are the results:

- Speech Trek and Returning Scholarships \$8,800
- Tech Trek \$5,900

This is a 71% increase over last year in your contributions to these projects. It will ensure that we are in a good position to fund our commitments for next year. A total of 60 members contributed to the Fall Campaign.

And Kudos to the Membership Committee for reaching our goal of 120 paid members for the year. The membership income of the branch and the expenditure planning by the Program Committee have put us in a good position.

December 31, 2023, Operating Account Balance \$4590.33

December 31, 2023, Fundraising Account Balance \$9287.56

Communications Update by Marie Dye

Your communications team is growing! Peggy Farness has joined Louise McDevitt in maintaining our website; Janice Heather and Debbie Boyd (who is also our photographer) update the branch Facebook page; and Janice, Pam Ames, Miriam Lauff, and Joan Thompson post our branch events on Next Door. Adrienne Peterson continues to create our newsletter. Thanks to all those who spread the word about AAUW and for anyone who wants to help post our news and events on social media, please contact Marie Dye at mdye@san.rr.com.

Membership by Harriet Gerza

Happy New Year! 2024 is already starting to be a good year for membership. We have added three new members! Please welcome Susan Reynolds, Hideko (Coco) Aubry and Sapna Mehta. Thank you to our members who recruited them and brought them to a meeting and "talking up" AAUW! Keep on bringing friends to meetings, talking about our branch and sharing your positive experiences and doing the amazing outreach you are doing!

We have added 6 new members since we published our directory! We are more than halfway to our goal of adding 10 overall this year so congratulations to everyone! We are now 126 members strong.



Meet our Newest Members:

Sapna Mehta was born in India, and lived in Zambia and U.K. as a child. She came to the U.S.A. to pursue a MSEE at University of Texas at Austin. After completing her studies, she moved to San Diego to work for a local company. She has worked as a system design engineer for satellite and terrestrial wireless communication systems over the last 25 years. Her personal interests include volunteering for Science Olympiad, reading, visiting national parks, and camping.



Hideko (CoCo) Aubry was born in Tokyo, Japan, and moved a few times because of her father's job. She graduated in Japan and got a job at Morgan Stanley Tokyo. People spoke English in the office, but she could not. So, she came to San Diego to improve her English, met her husband, and stayed here since 1989. She made friends, but friends have moved on so she is looking for an opportunity to meet new people. Coco likes traveling, hiking, and eating good food.



Susan Reynolds and spouse Jerry Hagen moved to Rancho Bernardo from Seattle, WA two and a half years ago and have loved making new friends and enjoying the beauty of Southern California. She obtained her LCSW in CA after taking many continuing education courses and studying for her law and ethics exam. She is currently working half-time for the Huntington Disease Society of America (HDSA) Orange and San Diego Counties as their chapter social worker. In her spare time she enjoys reading, swimming, walking, playing a little Pickleball, and connecting with family and friends. She is excited to join AAUW and looks forward to participating in activities and making a difference in the community.

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 Subcommittee frequently come across materials from groups advocating for book banning, curriculum censorship, and policies that negatively impact the lives of LGBTQ+ students, in the name of “Parents’ Rights.”

For example, the US 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 for 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 principle 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.pew.org), [Nea.org](https://www.nea.org).

Annual Lobby Days Dates Set; Talk to Elected Officials About the Issues We Care About

shared by Janice Heather
Each year, AAUW members have a chance to talk to our elected officials about the issues AAUW members care about. This year, Lobby Days are scheduled for Tuesday, April 2 and Wednesday, April 3. This is a great opportunity to meet with state legislators and advocate for our priority bills. Meetings will be held via Zoom as well as in person in Sacramento. A training webinar will be held on March 25 to equip you with everything you need for a successful meeting. **To participate, you MUST complete the sign-up form and attend the mandatory training.**

Please complete the sign-up form by February 15 so that we can learn your preferences and make plans for a successful, impactful AAUW California Lobby Days. Your voices are needed to bring about the changes AAUW is committed to. Click [HERE](#) to sign up for Lobby Days.

A mandatory webinar training session will be held via Zoom on March 25 at 7-9 p.m. Participants will receive training materials prior to the webinar. Click [HERE](#) to register for the training webinar.

And a Fun Time was had by All – Holiday Party 2023! posted on Facebook



**AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITY WOMEN
POWAY PENASQUITOS
AFFILIATE**

Diversity Statement

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization based on gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class

Mission Statement

AAUW advances equality for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, leadership, and research.

AAUW's 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.

National AAUW

www.aauw.org

California AAUW

www.aauw-ca.org

**PowayPenasquitos
AAUW**

www.powayarea-

ca.aauw.net

[aauwboard@gmail.co](mailto:aauwboard@gmail.com)

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AAUW Poway
Penasquitos Branch is a
501(c)3 corporation

President: Michelle
Blasberg

Programs/1st Vice

Presidents: Karen
McGurk, Joie Nolasco,
Ellie Slade

Membership/2nd Vice

Presidents: Harriet
Gerza, Linda Johnston

Secretary: Joan Natoli

Treasurer: Sheila Walker

Great Decisions by Marie Dye

One of the branch interest groups "Great Decisions" is a world affairs policy discussion group assisted by reading material from the Foreign Policy Association. We are just getting started with the new book for 2024 so now is a good time to join! We meet the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at a member's home. On February 1 we will be discussing Mideast Realignment. For more information, please contact Marie Dye at mdye@san.rr.com.

Happy Healthy Hikers by Mary Alice Rudelich and Jo Beneke

On Friday, February 16, Happy Healthy Hikers will visit Lake Poway for a moderate hike.

We hope you will join us for this hike. Please RSVP to Mary.rudelich@aol.com.

Grape Expectations Starts the New Year at a Favorite

Winery by Janice Heather

Our intrepid AAUW wine tasters will head to some new wineries in 2024 as well as revisit some favorites.

First, we head to Ramona on Friday, January 26 where we'll visit Vineyard Grant James Winery, a winery we enjoyed during a past visit. We especially enjoyed getting cozy around their fire pits, as well as their views and delicious wines.

<https://www.vineyardgrantjames.com/>

Then, on Saturday, February 24, we'll check out a new-to-us winery, Bastian's Vineyards, in nearby San Pasqual Valley. <https://bastiansvineyards.com/>

For folks who'd like to carpool, we'll meet each month at the old Rancho Bernardo Souplantation parking lot at 2 p.m.; we plan to be at the winery at 3 pm.

If you'd like to join us, RSVP to Janice Heather at janiceheather@hotmail.com.

Looking forward to seeing everyone on January 29!

Travel Group by Pam Ames

The Travel Group will meet on Friday, February 16 at 11:30 a.m. at Tony's Jacal 621 Valley Avenue in Solana Beach. Operating since 1946, Tony's Jacal is known as one of San Diego's most authentically local restaurants serving traditional Mexican dishes.

The carpool will meet at 11 a.m. at the PQ Park-and-Ride next to 24-Hour Fitness, 10029 Carmel Mountain Road. RSVP to Pam Ames at pamames123@gmail.com. All are welcome!

AAUW POWAY-PENASQUITOS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 2024

Date	Group	Topic	Group Leader	Meeting Details	Good to Know
Feb 1	Great Decisions	Mideast Realignment	Marie Dye, mdye@san.rr.com	We will meet at the home of Michelle Blasberg, 12509 Montero Court in Rancho Bernardo. Please RSVP to Michelle at michblas09@gmail.com .	Meets the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. No meeting in Dec., Jan., July, and Aug. Interested in joining? Marie Dye at mdye@san.rr.com .
Feb 3	Speech Trek Competition	<i>How can we ensure a robust public school curriculum that is accessible to all and teaches historically accurate information?</i>	Karen McGurk, kmcgurkrn@sbcglobal.net	The competition starts at 10 a.m. in the Community Room at the Rancho Penasquitos Library, 13330 Salmon River Road.	Open to the public.
Feb 12	Games Group	N/A	Aresa Toukdarian, atoukdar@gmail.com	TBD	Group meets once a month to play board games. Contact Aresa if you want to be added to the distribution list.
Feb 13	Page Turners	Horse, by Geraldine Brooks	Pam Ames, pamames123@gmail.com	Meet at 1:45 p.m. at the home of Ann Morgan, 9185 Oviedo Street in Rancho Penasquitos. RSVP to Pam Ames.	Meets the second Tuesday of every month at a member's home at 1:30 p.m. Contact Pam Ames if you wish to be added to the distribution list.
Feb 14	General Meeting	American Women Astronauts	Karen McGurk, kmcgurkrn@sbcglobal.net Ellie Slade, elliehs10.4.1582@gmail.com Joie Nolasco, joienolasco@gmail.com	The meeting is from 11 a.m. -1 p.m. at the Eastview Community Center located at 17520 Drayton Hall Way. Lunch will be provided. RSVP to aauwboard@gmail.com .	Bring a friend!
Feb 16	Happy Healthy Hikers	N/A	Mary Alice Rudelich, mary.rudelich@aol.com	Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Lake Poway. RSVP to Mary Alice at mary.rudelich@aol.com .	Hikes are once a month ranging from easy to moderate levels. Contact Mary Alice to be added to the distribution list.
Feb 16	Travel Group	N/A	Pam Ames, pamames123@gmail.com	Meet at 11:30 a.m. at Tony's Jacal, 621 Valley Avenue in Solana Beach. Carpool will meet at 11 a.m. at the PQ Park and Ride next to 24 Hour Fitness, 10029 Carmel Mountain Road. RSVP to Pam Ames.	Meets monthly at various local restaurants. Contact Pam Ames to be added to the distribution list.

Feb 22	Evening Book Group	Horse by Geraldine Brooks	Ann Morgan, annmorgansd@yahoo.com ; Marilyn Scheininger, marilyn.scheininger@gmail.com	Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Ann Morgan, 9185 Oviedo Street in Rancho Penasquitos. Please RSVP to Ann at annmorgansd@yahoo.com .	Meets the fourth Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. If you want to join the discussion, please email Ann or Marilyn.
Feb 24	Grape Expectations	N/A	Janice Heather, janiceheather@gmail.com	We will meet at the Bastian Winery, 15326 Bandy Canyon Road, from 3-5 p.m. https://bastiansvineyards.com/ . To reserve your spot, RSVP to Janice Heather at janiceheather@gmail.com .	We meet monthly for either wine or beer tasting. Please contact Janice to be added to the distribution list.
Feb 26	Monday Mysteries Book Group	The Judge's List by John Grisham	Pam Meyer, pamela.me4@gmail.com	Meet at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Ann Morgan, 9185 Oviedo Street in Rancho Penasquitos. Please RSVP to Ann at annmorgansd@yahoo.com .	Meets the fourth Monday of every month. Want to join the discussion? Email Pam Meyer.

FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14
11 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



AMERICAN WOMEN ASTRONAUTS

presented by Dr. Neil Farber, M.D.

Learn about women astronauts with Dr. Neil Farber, NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador and Docent for the San Diego Air & Space Museum. There have been 73 women in space, with 56 from the United States.

Light lunch will be provided

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to aauwboard@gmail.com
Everyone welcome! invite your friends and family!

Eastview Community Center
17520 Drayton Hall Way 92128

<https://www.facebook.com/AAUWPowayPQ>
<https://powayarea-ca.aauw.net/>

