

AAUW Poway-Penasquitos Branch

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Don't miss these February events & announcements:

- February 15: Sample Himalayan food with the Travel Group
- February 21: Experience San Diego Zoo Safari Park with Happy, Healthy Hikers
- February 21: Visit Orfila Vineyards & Winery with Grape Expectations
- February 26: Enjoy Fun & Games with the Games Group

## President's Message by Harriet Gerza

Happy 2025! Wow, that year went by so fast. I hope everyone had a wonderful, safe and healthy holiday season. Before we leave behind 2024, I want to highlight some of our amazing accomplishments.

Our treasurer, Kathy Moore, updated me on our fall campaign which was quite successful. Thank you for once again supporting our projects this year. I especially want to give a very big shout out to the generous donors who gave \$500 or more to fund Tech Trek, Scholarships, and Speech Trek. We appreciate everyone's contributions to sustain advancing the education and welfare of the girls (and boys in Speech Trek) and women that are embodied in our mission statement.

Another bright star is that our branch was recognized by the national AAUW Five Star Program. Please read below the letter I received from the Deputy Director of Advancement. We are so proud of our branch and the efforts of our membership and board to carry out our mission each year. It's nice to get recognized too!

Another quick post script, our nominating committee will be in action soon and might be calling you to help serve on our board next year. Please consider participating in this very worthwhile effort. We work as a team and spread out the workload so no one person needs to feel they carry too big a task. This has been one of the best experiences that I've

had the privilege to join, with great collaboration and interaction with very smart amazing women who get to decide the direction of our branch. Please join the board for the best ride of your life! Call me if you have any questions.

*Dear Branch President,*

*It is with great pleasure that I share some exciting news—AAUW Penasquitos (CA) Branch has achieved a star in AAUW's FY24 Five Star Program! Your branch attained the Communications & External Relations star. This recognition is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of your branch members to advancing AAUW's mission of gender equity for women and girls.*

*The Five Star Program is designed to honor branches that align their work with AAUW's strategic priorities in areas such as Advancement, Public Policy & Advocacy, Governance & Sustainability, Programming, and Communications & External Relations. Earning a star is an incredible accomplishment, and we are thrilled to celebrate this success with you.*

*While we will be updating the AAUW website soon to reflect all the branches that have earned stars this year,*

*we wanted to ensure your branch received this good first. Your achievement will be highlighted alongside other winning branches, showcasing your vital role in supporting AAUW's mission both locally and nationally. State leadership will be informed in the coming days.*

*Congratulations again on this well-deserved recognition. Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to creating a more equitable world. If you have any questions or would like additional resources to help your branch continue its progress in the Five Star Program, please don't hesitate to reach out.*

*Regards and Happy Holidays,*

*Tremayne A. Parquet (he/him/his)  
Deputy Director of Advancement, AAUW  
1310 L St. NW, Ste 1000, Washington, DC 20005  
p. 202.728.7611 | f. 202.463.7169*

## **General Meeting February 12 - The State of Hate and Antisemitism in 2024** by Joie Nolasco and Karen McGurk

Robert Hicks of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) will be delivering a presentation that explores current data and trends on antisemitism, hate, and hate crimes. Since ADL fights all forms of hate, but specializes in understanding antisemitism, the speaker will also be diving into enduring anti-Jewish myths and tropes, as well as the connections between antisemitism and other forms of hate. We will hear about ways we can be upstanders in the face of hate and difficult conversations, and how to separate political statements from support of the human condition.

Rob Hicks has been serving as Associate Regional Director for ADL San Diego since August 2021 and oversees policy and advocacy, community engagement and coalitions, antisemitism education, and ADL's Glass Leadership Institute. Prior to that, he interned with ADL's Washington, D.C. office. Rob's other professional experience includes work in political campaigns, private sector sales, and nonprofit development. He is originally from Toms River, New Jersey and earned a BA in Political Science with a minor in History from The College of New Jersey in 2019. He moved to the San Diego area to pursue work with ADL and has lived in La Mesa since October 2021. He is happy and proud to now call San Diego home!

On the "Our Values" section of the ADL homepage, it states: "Confronting antisemitism, our founders established ADL based on their Jewish values. We build on their legacy as we speak out on behalf of all marginalized communities across the country and around the globe." (Retrieved on January 17, 2025 from:

<https://www.adl.org/about/who-we-are>)

Q&A will follow the presentation.

## **Nominating Committee Looking for Volunteers** by Joan Thompson

Are you interested in expanding your skills and interactions with fellow PPAAUW members?

The nominating committee is looking for folks interested in leadership positions, especially in Programs. There will also be other positions available on the appointed board.

If you have interest in running for VP Programs or Co-VP Programs or any other position, please call or text Joan Thompson, Chair of Nominating Committee at 858-837-9078 or email her at [kb6cut@cox.net](mailto:kb6cut@cox.net).

You may find serving on the AAUW P-P Board a very rewarding experience. Looking forward to hearing from you!

## **Why AAUW Public Policy Priorities Matter** by Nancy Major, Member AAUW California Public Policy Committee (shared by Marie Dye)

Why do AAUW's Public Policy Priorities matter? They shape the actions that we take as an organization, socially and legally.

AAUW's mission is to advance equity for women and girls. Our Public Policy Priorities guide how we encourage active citizenship toward the goal of advancing our mission. There are four branches to our Public Policy Priorities: Economic Security, Equal Access to Quality Public Education, Social and Racial Justice, and Increased representation of Women in Leadership roles. Each of these priorities is further broken down into several action-oriented subcategories, such as enforcement of Title IX and passage of the ERA. Our 2023-25 priorities can be found at <https://www.aauw-ca.org/public-policy-priorities-ppp-revised/>.

As active participants in society we can help shape the laws and society that govern us, such as healthcare, environmental policies, sex education, curriculum and book banning, housing, childcare, voting rights, immigrants' rights, sexual harassment, domestic violence, racial and LGBTQ discrimination, and Title IX enforcement. We "advocate" or promote our mission through research, education and lobbying for legislation on the international, national, state, and local levels.

History has shown that our advocacy has made a big impact on national, state, and local laws. In California alone, you can see the laws that AAUW sponsored, authored, and/or promoted, including those that were passed in the most recent session by going to [AAUW California Bill Tracking Report 2024 - Google Sheets](#). AAUW is also doing impactful work internationally, working to curtail human trafficking and promote civil and human rights for all immigrants, including through participation in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

Against Women (CEDAW). Over the next four years, there will be a lot of opportunities to use this legislative advocacy to push back against attempts to overturn long standing human rights and civil rights protections.

Our Public Policy Priorities also shape our efforts to push forward programs that break through educational and economic barriers for women such as speaker programs, scholarships, oversight of local school boards, leadership and salary training, STEM opportunities for students, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs.

Why do our Public Policy Priorities matter? They make us the most effective advocates for our collective mission to protect and expand gender equity. At the branch and individual levels, we can take advantage of as many opportunities as possible to operationalize our Public Policy Priorities, and through this work to actively promote AAUW's mission. AAUW as an organization relies on the branches to stay informed and to keep track of where our Public Policy Priorities may fall short, to form coalitions with local allies who have similar missions, and to assign branch members to focus where we can have the most impact.

## Finance Report and Fundraising by Kathy Moore

### FUNDRAISING ACCOUNT

The Fundraising Account Balance on December 31, 2024 was \$12,702.

Your generosity in our Fall Campaign will allow us to continue our excellent programs. Thank you! Here are the results:

Speech Trek and Returning Scholarships: \$5,725  
Tech Trek: \$11,000

We came close to meeting our goal of \$6,000 for our Speech Trek and Scholarship programs. Along with our May Cover to Cover program, we will be able to fund our commitments for 2025.

Our Tech Trek donations exceeded our projections and will allow us to continue funding this amazing program next year, despite an increase in program costs.

If you've been meaning to send in a donation, but haven't yet done so, please know that it's not too late. We accept donations throughout the year.

### OPERATING ACCOUNT

Thanks are also due to our Membership Committee for continuing to grow our membership. Our 120 paid members contribute to funding our operating costs. We are in a good position for 2025.

The Operating Account Balance on December 31, 2024 was \$4,645.

## Speech Trek Prepares for February 8 Competition by Karen McGurk

The Speech Trek competition will be held on Saturday, February 8 at 10 a.m. at Rancho Peñasquitos Branch Library. This year's topic is:

***Climate Change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet. Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA, and around the world.***



It is sure to be an exciting competition. Please join us and 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 [aauwboard@gmail.com](mailto:aauwboard@gmail.com), and please add Speech Trek to the Subject Line.



## Travel Group by Pam Ames

The Travel Group met for lunch in late December for Mexican food at T & T Tacos and Tequila. It was a good chance to hear about travel plans made for 2025. Some of the planned destinations include Egypt, Norway, Australia, Canada, and Spain. Our next lunch is on Saturday, February 15 at 11:30 a.m. We will try the Himalayan Grill (Indian, Nepalese & Tibetan) located at 9842 Hibert St, Scripps Ranch (Trader Joe's complex). Please RSVP to Pam Ames at [pamames123@gmail.com](mailto:pamames123@gmail.com) to reserve a seat. All are welcome!



**Women's History Month Tea** by Joie Nolasco

Let's celebrate Women's History month with the La Mesa-El Cajon AAUW. The Poway-Peñasquitos branch is supplying the entertainment for the event.

*Celebrating Us and Women Who Inspired Our Stories*

# Women's History Month Tea

**Date & Time: March 22, 2025, 2:00 - 4:00 PM**

**Location: Maureen Seitz's Home**

**1685 Fuerte Knolls Ln, El Cajon**

**Cost: \$25.00, includes 6 kinds of tea, sweet and savory treats, memorable conversation and guest appearances by some women from history.**

**Costumes are admired but not required.**



*Contact Sandy Galea-Martinez at [sagaleamartinez@gmail.com](mailto:sagaleamartinez@gmail.com), if you have any questions or would like to sign up. Only the first 28 will be accepted. No drop ins the day of will be accepted. Your fee can be mailed to Sandy or paid at the February 8th general meeting. You must have a confirmation ticket to attend.*

**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](http://www.aauw.org)

**California AAUW**

[www.aauw-ca.org](http://www.aauw-ca.org)

**PowayPenasquitos  
AAUW**

[www.powayarea-](http://www.powayarea-)

[ca.aauw.net](http://ca.aauw.net)

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

[m](mailto:m)

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

**President:** Harriet Gerza

**Programs/1<sup>st</sup> Vice**

**Presidents:** Karen

McGurk, Joie Nolasco

**Membership/2<sup>nd</sup> Vice**

**Presidents:** Pam Ames,

Miriam Lauff

**Secretary:** Debby

Dutilly

**Treasurer:** Kathy Moore

**Games, Games, Games** by Aresa Toukdarian and Harriet Gerza

The Games Group will meet Wednesday, February 26 at 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Harriet's house, 17888 Avenida Cordillera, San Diego, CA 92128. We play all sorts of board games, charades, cards, trivia, and nonsense games. Join us to strengthen your memory, develop new skills, and have a lot of laughs.

Light refreshments and BYOB snacks will be offered. Any questions or interest, please contact Aresa [atoukdar@gmail.com](mailto:atoukdar@gmail.com) or Harriet [Harriet.gerza@gmail.com](mailto:Harriet.gerza@gmail.com)

**Happy Healthy Hikers Visit Safari Park** by Mary Alice Rudelich

Because entrance to the Safari Park is free for seniors in February, hikers will be going to the park on February 21. We will meet at the park at 9 a.m. The carpool will meet at the Rancho Bernardo Library parking lot at 8:30 a.m. We hope to have a roaring good time and enjoy lunch at the Watering Hole.

Please RSVP to [mary.rudelich@aol.com](mailto:mary.rudelich@aol.com) if you plan to join us.

Cheers,  
Mary Alice and Jo

**Grape Expectations to Visit Orfila Vineyards** by Janice Heather

AAUW P-P oenophiles will visit one of San Diego county's best-known wineries, Orfila Vineyards & Winery, on Friday, February 21. Located at 13455 San Pasqual Road and en route to the San Diego Safari Park, we'll be there from 3-5 p.m.

Orfila has won many awards for its wines and is known for both reds and whites. For more information, check out their website at <https://www.orfila.com>.

Please let Rebecca Fontaine know if you plan to attend so seating can be arranged. RSVP to [rebecca.fontaine07@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.fontaine07@gmail.com). Carpools will leave from the Rancho Bernardo Library parking lot (by the old Souplantation building) at 2:30 p.m.

**Notable Women in History: 10 Things You Might Not Know about Sally Ride** by Joie Nolasco

Sally Ride is remembered as the first American woman in space and as a champion of diversity and equity in science education, but here are 10 things you might not know!

1. She aspired to play shortstop for the Dodgers.
2. Her parents didn't understand her interest in science.
3. She was an avid stamp collector.
4. She and her future life partner were girlhood pals.
5. She played tennis against Billie Jean King.
6. She decided over scrambled eggs that she wanted to be an astronaut.
7. Her sister is a minister.
8. She was the voice of ground control.
9. She was a daredevil.
10. She had to set NASA engineers straight about some things.

Learn more about the long-time physics professor and founder of the nonprofit Sally Ride Science at UC San Diego at: <https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/20-things-you-might-not-know-about-sally-ride/>

# AAUW POWAY-PENASQUITOS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## January 2025

Date	Group	Topic	Group Leader	Meeting Details	Good to Know
Feb. 6	<b>Great Decisions</b>	American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads	Sally Jacobson, <a href="mailto:jacobs@san.rr.com">jacobs@san.rr.com</a> Marie Dye, <a href="mailto:mdye@san.rr.com">mdye@san.rr.com</a>	Meeting hosted and discussion led by Rita Murphy, 1751 Citracado Parkway in Escondido at 6:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Rita at <a href="mailto:ritajmurphy@aol.com">ritajmurphy@aol.com</a> if you can attend.	Meets the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. No meeting in Dec., Jan., July, and Aug. Interested in joining? Please email Marie Dye at <a href="mailto:mdye@san.rr.com">mdye@san.rr.com</a> .
Feb. 8	<b>Speech Trek</b>	Climate Change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet. Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA, and around the world.	Karen McGurk, <a href="mailto:kmcgurkrn@sbcglobal.net">kmcgurkrn@sbcglobal.net</a>	The Speech Trek competition will be from 10 a.m.- noon at the Rancho Penasquitos Branch Library located at 13330 Salmon River Road, 92129.	Bring friends and family to cheer on the students!
Feb. 11	<b>Page Turners</b>	<b>The Exceptions: Nancy Hopkins, MIT, &amp; the fight for the Women in Science,</b> by Kate Zernike	Pam Ames, <a href="mailto:pamames123@gmail.com">pamames123@gmail.com</a>	Meet at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Barbara Fisher, 13217 Deron Avenue in Rancho Penasquitos. RSVP to Barbara at <a href="mailto:afisherjr@aol.com">afisherjr@aol.com</a> .	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. 12	<b>General Meeting</b>	The State of Hate and Antisemitism in 2024	Joie Nolasco <a href="mailto:joienolasco@gmail.com">joienolasco@gmail.com</a> Karen McGurk <a href="mailto:kmcgurkrn@sbcglobal.net">kmcgurkrn@sbcglobal.net</a>	Robert Hicks of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) will be delivering a presentation that explores current data and trends on antisemitism, hate, and hate crimes. ADL speaks out on behalf of all marginalized communities across the country and around the globe.	Bring friends and family!
Feb. 15	<b>Travel Group</b>	N/A	Pam Ames, <a href="mailto:pamames123@gmail.com">pamames123@gmail.com</a>	Lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Himalayan Grill located at 9842 Hibert Street in Scripps Ranch. RSVP to Pam at <a href="mailto:pamames123@gmail.com">pamames123@gmail.com</a> .	Meets monthly at various local restaurants. Contact Pam Ames to be added to the distribution list.

<b>Feb. 21</b>	<b>Happy Healthy Hikers</b>	N/A	Mary Alice Rudelich, <a href="mailto:mary.rudelich@aol.com">mary.rudelich@aol.com</a>	Let's go to the Safari Park! It's admission free for Seniors in February. We will meet at the Safari Park at 9 a.m. If you want to carpool, meet at the Rancho Bernardo Library parking lot at 8:30 a.m. We will have lunch at the Watering Hole. RSVP to Mary Alice at <a href="mailto:mary.rudelich@aol.com">mary.rudelich@aol.com</a> .	Hikes are once a month ranging from easy to moderate levels. Contact Mary Alice to be added to the distribution list.
<b>Feb. 21</b>	<b>Grape Expectations</b>	N/A	Janice Heather, <a href="mailto:janiceheather@gmail.com">janiceheather@gmail.com</a>	This month we will visit Orfila Vineyards & Winery at 13455 San Pasqual Road from 3-5 p.m. Please RSVP to Rebecca Fontaine at <a href="mailto:rebecca.fontaine07@gmail.com">rebecca.fontaine07@gmail.com</a> .	We meet monthly for either wine or beer tasting. Please contact Janice to be added to the distribution list.
<b>Feb. 24</b>	<b>Monday Mysteries Book Group</b>	<b>Moriarty</b> , by Anthony Horowitz	Pam Meyer, <a href="mailto:pamela.me4@gmail.com">pamela.me4@gmail.com</a>	The meeting is at the home of Ann Morgan, 9185 Oviedo in Rancho Penasquitos. Please RSVP to Ann at <a href="mailto:annmorgansd@yahoo.com">annmorgansd@yahoo.com</a> if you able to attend.	Meets the fourth Monday of every month. Please email Pam Meyer to be added to the distribution list.
<b>Feb. 26</b>	<b>Games Group</b>	N/A	Aresa Toukdarian, <a href="mailto:atoukdar@gmail.com">atoukdar@gmail.com</a> Harriet Gerza, <a href="mailto:harriet.gerza@gmail.com">harriet.gerza@gmail.com</a>	Games to be played from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the home of Harriet Gerza, 17888 Avenida Cordillera in Rancho Bernardo. Please RSVP to Harriet or Aresa. Light refreshments will be offered.	Please contact Aresa or Harriet with any questions.
<b>Feb. 27</b>	<b>Thursday Book Group</b>	<b>Tom Lake</b> , by Ann Patchett	Ann Morgan, <a href="mailto:annmorgansd@yahoo.com">annmorgansd@yahoo.com</a> ; Marilyn Scheininger, <a href="mailto:marilyn.scheininger@gmail.com">marilyn.scheininger@gmail.com</a>	Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Julie Hoyle at 13840 Riverhead Court in Rancho Penasquitos. Please RSVP to Julie at <a href="mailto:thehoyles@sbcglobal.net">thehoyles@sbcglobal.net</a> .	Meets the fourth Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. If you want to join the discussion, please email Ann or Marilyn.



**San Diego County InterBranch Council (SDC-IBC)**

**Annual All-Branch Luncheon**

**Saturday, January 25, 2025, 10:30 am**



**Lomas Santa Fe Country Club**  
1505 Lomas Santa Fe Drive  
Solana Beach 92075

Cabrillo-Diego  
Carlsbad-Oceanside-Vista  
Del Mar-Leucadia  
Fallbrook  
La Mesa-El Cajon  
Poway-Peñasquitos  
San Diego

The **Del Mar-Leucadia and Carlsbad-Oceanside-Vista Branches** cordially invite you to

**Our Special Guest Speakers: One Safe Place Staff**



*One Safe Place - the North County Family Justice Center - provides comprehensive help in a safe and judgment-free environment that empowers people to move forward with their lives. They provide free support services all under one roof to anyone who has experienced child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, hate crime, elder abuse, human trafficking, violent loss, family violence, or other abuse or victimization.*

join us for lunch and a good time together renewing old friendships, meeting new friends, bidding on enticing silent auction items to take home, and hearing what the other members have been up to. See you at the Club!

- 10:30 am Check-in & Silent Auction
- 11:00 am Welcome Address
- 11:30 am Lunch
- 12:15 pm Speaker

Questions? Call or text Cathy at (858) 449-5096, or e-mail [cburciaga@san.rr.com](mailto:cburciaga@san.rr.com)

**RSVPs are a Must - by January 14<sup>th</sup> please!!**

Yes, (name) \_\_\_\_\_ (branch) \_\_\_\_\_ will be there.

And, I am bringing \_\_\_\_\_ guests: \_\_\_\_\_

**Select Your Entrée(s):**    Seared Salmon    Wine Country Salad with Chicken  
 Vegetarian Roasted Vegetable Wrap

**Cost: \$45. Enclosed is my check payable to "SDC-IBC".**

**Tear off this reply & mail to: AAUW IBC Luncheon, PO Box 262012, San Diego, CA 92196**

# SPEECH TREK COMPETITION

## February 8, 2025

California high school students are invited to compete in Speech Trek, a speech competition sponsored by the American Association of University Women of California. All contestants create 5-6 minute speeches on the following public policy topic:

*Climate Change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet. Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA, and around the world.*

**INTERESTED?** Contact AAUW Poway-Peñasquitos Branch at [aauwboard@gmail.com](mailto:aauwboard@gmail.com) for more information and to register for the event. Please include Speech Trek in the subject line. **The application deadline is January 24, 2025.\*** The contest will be held in-person at Rancho Peñasquitos Branch Library.

### LOCAL PRIZES

First Place - \$750.00  
Second Place - \$500.00  
Third Place - \$250.00

Winner of the local contest participates in state semi-finals.

The top three state semi-finalists compete for more cash prizes.

Speeches from previous years can be viewed on YouTube by searching "Speech Trek."

**\*Please note:** The competition will be limited to the first 10 applicants.

