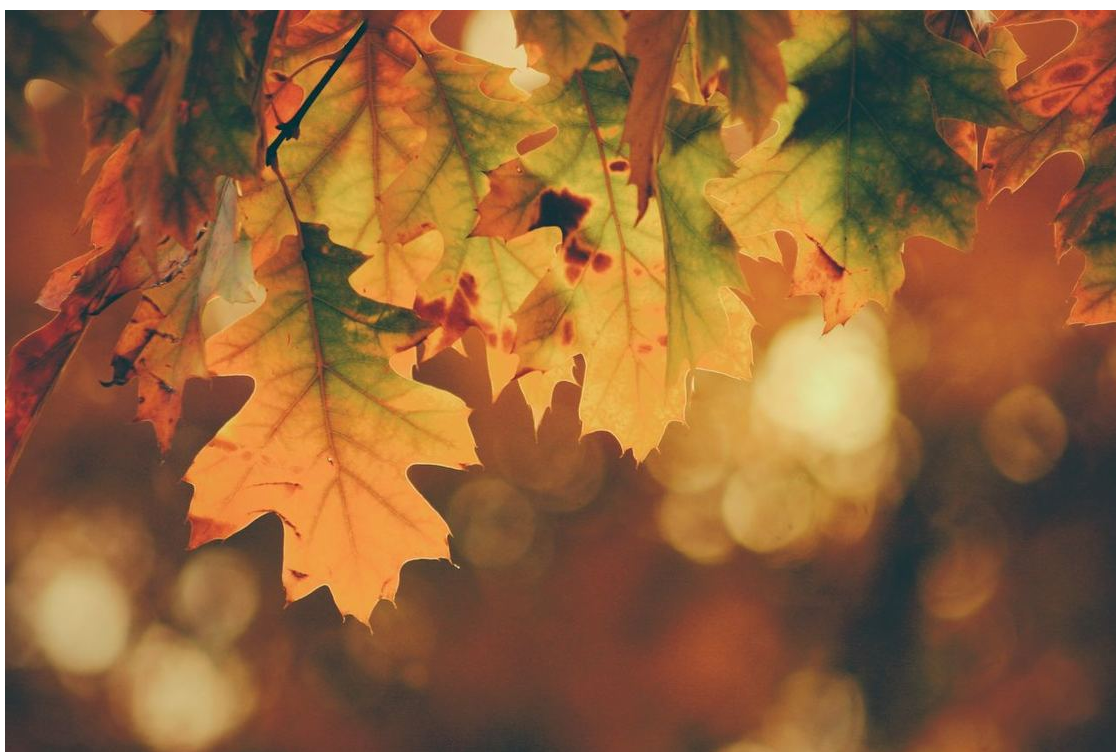




## The Evergreen Leader

AAUW Washington Newsletter

October 2023 Volume 35, No. 4



***For a printable PDF version of the newsletter, click [here](#)***

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# President's Message

Emily Hitchens

AAUW-WA President  
[president@aauw-wa.org](mailto:president@aauw-wa.org)



My first three submissions for the Evergreen Leader *President's Message* were inspired by my own experience. As I try to prepare this month's message, I have been waiting for inspiration, but nothing has come! So, I have been thinking about inspiration and where it comes from. And most importantly, pondering what message could be inspiring for our AAUW-WA members.

My first thought is to remind us all to inhale. As a new graduate nurse at Virginia Mason hospital, I had 15 patients, an LPN and an aide on my team. As the nurse I managed the medications and treatments in what was called the 'functional' model. One of the treatments was known as the 'bird respirator'. It was prescribed for patients who had various lung conditions or needed to breathe after surgery. Usually the 'breathing machine treatment' was three or four times a day.

Later on in my career, when teaching mental health nursing, I learned the [\*Relaxation Response\*](#) by Herbert Benson, MD. Simply put, this method focused on deep breathing and learning to 'let the tensions go'. When working with a group, I would ask them to think of the space where they felt most comfortable. Usually, the answer was some place in nature, the ocean, the forest or by a creek. Then, I would ask them to visualize this place and imagine they were there. I would model visualizing myself at the beach, smelling and breathing in the 'salt sea fresh air', listening to the sea gulls, ocean waves lapping on the shore and feeling my toes in the sand. I would end by reminding them these spaces are ones we could return to anytime to help feel calmer and more relaxed.

What is inspiration? And where does it come from? It can be a physical practice of breathing in a space where we can reconnect with our body. I think it is a useful practice for all of us in AAUW-WA. Each of us need, at times, to slow down, breathe and listen to our bodies. Being in nature, whether physically or through visualization, can *inspire* us as well, offering the opportunity for reflection and renewal as we go about our lives finding ways to promote education and equity for women and girls.

Emily

# State News



Jodi Forsell  
AAUW-WA Programs  
[programs@aauw-wa.org](mailto:programs@aauw-wa.org)

Opportunity is defined as a chance for advancement or progress, and equal opportunity for all is AAUW's vision. So Opportunity Matters is a powerful theme for our fall series of webinars. The webinars will be held on the **second Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.** Tickets are \$15 for single sessions and registration is through Eventbrite.

[Register Here!](#)

Here are the specific dates and presenters:

*Completed - September 12:* Our AAUW Lobbyist Nancy Sapiro and Sandra Distelhorst will talk briefly about upcoming legislation. This will be followed by Sandra talking with Dr Gina Masullo about her research on political engagement and opportunities to advance gender equity through legislation and community action. She is the author of her new book "The New Town Hall: Why We Engage Personally With Politicians"

*Completed -October 3 -* State Senator Karen Keiser, author of [Getting Elected Is the Easy Part](#), shares her observations about opportunities for upcoming generations of women legislators and leaders.

*Completed -October 10:* Cat Howell, executive director of [Literacy Source](#) in Seattle, and Katherine Freimund, director of [Whatcom Literacy Council](#), describe how they create opportunities to read and empower women through literacy.

**November 14:** Jessica Gerdes, Manager of Outreach and Mentorship at the [Department of Translational Medicine and Physiology](#) at Washington State University. By introducing students in rural school to healthcare roles such as EMT, her program addresses the shortage of healthcare providers in rural areas in our state.

**December 12:** [Grace Yoo](#), executive director of the Washington State Women's Commission, established in 2018 by Governor Inslee. She will be discussing the work of the commission and providing opportunities for women in leadership.

In setting up this series of webinars, we looked for representation from around the state, in diverse communities, small towns, and rural areas. Our goal is to have a future focus, as well as examples of current practice, to showcase the opportunities that matter, that will make our vision a reality.

If you would like to hear our speaker, Dr Season Hoard, from the June kick off, you can click on the link below to our AAUW-WA YouTube channel. Dr Hoard presented "The Gender Pay Gap: The Opportunity

## Membership Corner

*Jeanne Nygard*  
AAUW-WA Membership Director  
[membership@aauw-wa.org](mailto:membership@aauw-wa.org)

On Monday, October 2, 2023, our Membership Meeting attendees had a productive time discussing what a toolkit for branch membership could contain to best benefit and help our WA-AAUW branches. The original intent of this toolkit was to help attract and keep members, but as the discussion continued the project morphed. It is clear our toolkit will benefit more than just branch membership. How exciting!

Watch for further news about our *Branch Toolkit* as we develop and fine tune this new project which we hope to have up and running soon.

The other topic on our agenda was our meeting schedule, determining when we will meet. Currently we are meeting via Zoom the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month at 12:30 pm. We are still accepting input on this topic so if you have a comment or suggestion, please send your email to Jeanne Nygard at [membership@aauw-wa.org](mailto:membership@aauw-wa.org)

**Our next meeting is Monday, October 16, 2023, at 12:30.** Please join us. The recurring link is below and is always in our **AAUW-WA website calendar**. We would love to have you join us!

<https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/activities-information/calendar/>

Membership Meeting, October 16, 2023, 12:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81312331083?pwd=ZE9qTXdXblJyQUI4S0FOK3hmaEZTQT09>

Meeting ID: 813 1233 1083

Passcode: 649306

## Communications

*Mary Ross*  
AAUW-WA Communications Director  
[communications@aauw-wa.org](mailto:communications@aauw-wa.org)

Is your branch using Zoom, even after pandemic restrictions have ended? Although we value the in-person interactions with other members, Zoom is a useful tool for meetings, book discussions, programs, socializing, etc. We can avoid time and travel expenses, nighttime driving, and other barriers to in-person get-togethers.

Want to use Zoom more effectively? Get started using Zoom?

**Join us for Zoom Tips and Tricks, Thursday, October 26, 6:30 p.m.**

Explore with Jodi Forsell and Mary Ross the ways that your branch can use Zoom. They'll show you some tips and tricks for personalizing your Zoom presence, running a more efficient meeting, and even having fun. You'll also learn how to use the AAUW WA State Zoom Pro account if your branch doesn't have a Zoom Pro account.

We'll cover these basic Zoom features:

- Changing your name in Zoom
- How to blur your background or use a custom background image
- If you are hosting a Zoom meeting, how to eliminate background noise
- How to use the Raise Hand tool and Reactions
- Change your view from Speaker to Gallery
- Save the Chat
- Screen-sharing and using a Whiteboard for sharing ideas

[Please pre-register at this link](#) and come with your own tips, tricks, and questions.

## Public Policy

*Sandra Distelhorst*  
AAUW-WA Public Policy Director  
[publicpolicy@aauw-wa.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-wa.org)

The gender pay gap is in the news this week thanks to the Nobel Prize in Economics being awarded to Claudia Goldin for her research on women in the workforce and the gender pay gap.

Her research on economic contributors to the gender pay gap suggest the best way to close the gap is to rethink our workplace model to allow flexible work hours and less face time, as well as provide government subsidized childcare and parental leave. Check out the many articles circulating on Goldin's Nobel Prize and her research.

A new report on [Book Bans and Curriculum Gag Orders](#) by the Federal House Oversight Committee was released last week. We expect to see several state bills introduced in 2024 that will address book bans and curriculum as well as protects for educators and librarians from disciplinary actions related to the "culture wars".

Public Policy Team will start gearing up for the 2024 legislative session in mid-November. **Send us your list of AAUW-WA priorities to consider: [publicpolicy@aauw-wa.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-wa.org).**

## Tech Trek

*Karen Manelis*  
AAUW-WA Tech Trek  
[techtrek@aauw-wa.org](mailto:techtrek@aauw-wa.org)

## Vision for the Future

The Tech Trek program has been a stellar feature of AAUW programming in Washington state since 2013. Since its start, approximately 1,250 rising eighth grade students have participated. Several of those early campers continue to support and be part of the Tech Trek program.

On October 11, almost 30 AAUW members from all over the state – branch Tech Trek coordinators, past and current AAUW WA Tech Trek staff and former campers – met to determine “next steps” for this highly successful program.

While no individual has stepped forward to become the overall program director (the head honcho that keeps all the balls juggling), there is high interest – particularly among former campers – to be a part of this program to ensure that it continues at the highest level possible.

The AAUW WA Tech Trek program has many strengths – strong curriculum, experienced teachers, diversity of classes, age of campers, pulling students from all over the state of Washington and a growth mindset that the campers take home with them. We are still challenged by the task of fundraising, making connections with schools, lack of staff diversity and the total amount of time and womanpower it takes to make camp successful.

Our goal in 2024 is to continue building on the strengths identified and work on the challenges we see.

If you would like to participate in any of the redesign of the program or take on any of the tasks necessary to keep Tech Trek going, please contact [techtrek@aauw-wa.org](mailto:techtrek@aauw-wa.org).

Pacific Lutheran University has provided tentative dates for two weeks of camp in 2024 (July 7-13 and July 14-20, 2024). We have willing young women to direct both camp weeks, manage our volunteer staff cadre and perform the other necessary tasks to make camp happen. We are on our way!

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## Branch Events

### AAUW-WA Online

Melissa Johnsen  
AAUW-Online  
[johnsen.melissa@gmail.com](mailto:johnsen.melissa@gmail.com)

*The AAUW WA Online Branch would love to have our fellow WA AAUWers join us in a **Virtual Mix & Mingle on October 25 - 5 pm to 6 pm PST.***

*We will do a round robin introduction of the attendees who join us, have a fun, short ice breaker, all the while drinking your favorite imbibement! We will close the Virtual Mix & Mingle with sharing the AAUW WA Online proposed 23/24 programs and answer any questions anyone might have.*

*Please RSVP to Melissa Johnsen @ [johnsen.melissa@gmail.com](mailto:johnsen.melissa@gmail.com). If you have any questions, please let Melissa know.*

*The AAUW WA Online is looking forward to virtually meeting our fellow WA AAUWers!*

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## Edmonds SnoKing

Jodi Forsell  
AAUW-Edmonds Sno King  
[aauw.esk@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.esk@gmail.com)





## Meet Your Candidates

With an enthusiastic response from 20+ participating candidates, the Edmonds SnoKing Branch hosted our first "Meet Your Candidates" event and it was one for the books!

We are appreciative to the candidates that took time out of their busy schedules to address our

branch members, friends and neighbors in attendance today in Edmond City Park

From local school board races to mayoral candidates, waste water candidates and those running for various local city council races, fire commissioner as well as folks running for county-wide races like Auditor, Assessor, Sheriff and Superior Court Judge; it was fantastic to learn a bit about each of the candidates and what drives their passion to serve their constituents and communities.

Feel free to reach out to [aauw.esk@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.esk@gmail.com) to find out more info on how to host an event like this!

## 50th Anniversary

The Edmonds SnoKing Branch recently celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. The event was held on Edmonds College Campus in Hazel Miller Hall. The story goes that Hazel Miller had done quite well with her investments over the years and one day walked into her local bank with 10 Million in investments. Hazel Miller hall is one of her legacies and is dedicated to the study of Science, Technology, and Math. Before her passing, Hazel Miller was a member of the Edmonds Branch! We had over 25 members in attendance, and heard from both Gloria Blackwell and Emily Hitchens talk about the future of AAUW.



### Edmonds SnoKing Photos

From left to right - 1st photo includes Edmonds SnoKing past presidents. The middle picture is a photo of 4 members who have been members of AAUW for over 50 years including 1 founding member Barbara Bentson.



## Port Townsend

Roseanna Almaee  
AAUW-Port Townsend

# *AAUW Women Build Day - Habitat for Humanity*

Our state president, Emily Hitchens, came to Port Townsend and participated in the **AAUW Women Build Day with Habitat for Humanity!** We were thrilled to have her and her husband to support us in the important work of providing housing for women by women!

## *75th Anniversary*

### *Women of the Global Majority*

The American Association of University Women, AAUW, is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> year in Port Townsend, and this year, we are recognizing women of the global majority who live and work here and add to our rich community culture. Meet our most recent honorees, (l to r) Tonia Burkett and Natalia Duran.



For the month of **September**, AAUW is recognizing **Tonia Burkett**. Ms Burkett earned her BA and MA degrees in Portland, OR and worked on her doctoral studies in North Carolina as a Ford Foundation Fellow. Her work is centered on community organizing and education through consulting and workshops. She has her own company, USAWA, which is Swahili for “equity”. Here in Port Townsend she has worked with Black Lives Matter of Jefferson County and other groups on anti-racist education and training building safe, respectful community cohorts who share accountability for their learning. Her work model is based on “spiritual economics” and respectful, loving, relationship building.

For the month of **October**, the AAUW is recognizing **Natalia Duran**, the Outreach Coordinator for Jefferson County Immigrant Rights Advocates here in Port Townsend. Natalia immigrated to the United States from Mexico in 2012 after earning her BA degree there, and has many talents from design, sewing, organizing, and management. In Mexico she worked as a fashion designer/illustrator for jeans from design through the industrial process to the final product. Locally, she has created original designs and up-crafting clothing in children’s wear, then sewing and selling her items. Through her volunteer work for Dove House, she was encouraged to apply for the position at JCIRA, and was hired there.

At JCIRA she works with immigrants from Ukraine, Afghanistan, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru and more – all here in our community. She also represents JCIRA in area schools during equity training for teachers and staff so that they can better serve our diverse population. One of her passions is serving immigrant children by seeking collaboration with groups to fund local camps and after school activities for these students.

Finally, she involves her daughter in many of her activities to set an example of being an advocate for others.

The AAUW of Port Townsend is honored to recognize Tonia Burkett and Natalia Duran as vital woman of the global majority in our community.





## Seattle

Tonna Kutner  
AAUW-Seattle  
tonnakut@gmail.com

### *An Indigenous Woman's Perspective*

**Patricia "Patsy" Whitefoot** is a noted elder, traditional food gatherer for the Yakama Nation, an activist for Indigenous rights, and professional educator.

**Sunday, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2pm via Zoom.**

No Charge, Reservations Required:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEsduGurDogG9b87cwqtF6XNN5UF6fteKD>

Join us for this important program. Whitefoot's perspective is much bigger than just "land acknowledgements." Whitefoot has an incredible background. Beyond the brief biography above, she served as president of the National Indian Education Association and was appointed by President Obama as a member of the National Advisory Council on Indian Education. She is a prominent advocate for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and counts her own sister as one of the many victims of this crisis. [https://www.yakimaherald.com/news/topics/the\\_vanished/yakama-educator-activist-honored-for-work-on-missing-indigenous-women-issue/article\\_8bda3a3e-5112-11e9-9ba9-1f3e549545c3.html](https://www.yakimaherald.com/news/topics/the_vanished/yakama-educator-activist-honored-for-work-on-missing-indigenous-women-issue/article_8bda3a3e-5112-11e9-9ba9-1f3e549545c3.html)

The Edmonds SnoKing Branch will join us for this presentation. Feel free to join us individually from your home or get together with others in your area to watch this interesting program.

More Information <https://aauw-seattle.org/calendar/filter-by/event/160/2023/11/19>



### *AAUW Seattle Art Smart Group*

Melissa Johnsen  
[johnsen.melissa@gmail.com](mailto:johnsen.melissa@gmail.com)

The **AAUW Seattle Art Smart Group** is planning a visit to the **Bainbridge Island Museum of Art on October 18**, meeting in the lobby at 10am. The group will be led by **Ann Dennis**. The museum is just up the hill from the Ferry Dock. The group will be touring the art of **Linda Okazaki: Into the Light** is a retrospective of paintings by the Port Townsend artist. There is a cafe at the Museum, BIMA Bistro.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Melissa Johnsen at [johnsen.melissa@gmail.com](mailto:johnsen.melissa@gmail.com).

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# Walla Walla

Annie Yetmez  
AAUW-WW Public Policy  
annieyetmez@gmail.com

## Candidate Forum

AAUW-Walla Walla co-hosted a general election candidate forum with the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce on October 4th, 2023, via Zoom. Following a new public policy branch chair coming on board in June, planning started in earnest in August, and despite the tight timeframe 158 attendees registered for the one-night event with candidates for the following races: Port of Walla Walla, Port Commissioner Position 2; City of Walla Walla, City Council Positions 4, 5, and 6; and Walla Walla School District 140, School Director, Positions 3, 4, and 5. The Chamber regularly hosts webinars via its Zoom account so it was decided to use their Zoom account and registration infrastructure for the forum. Candidates for all positions were contacted via email, telephone, and in person using publicly available information at <https://voter.votewa.gov/>; all candidates but 3 school board director candidates attended. Notably, these 3 candidates presented themselves as a "common-sense conservative" slate and cited concerns about being video taped and having their words altered later; this was not an issue for any other candidates.

Promotions by AAUW Walla Walla included:

- Placement on our website
- Facebook posts
- Email newsblast shared with AAUW-Walla Walla members
- Tabling at a City of Walla Walla community party
- Flyers with a QR code to register for the event, distributed at local businesses, restaurants, and community bulletin boards
- One-week radio ad run (3x daily) on our local NWPR station, the week leading up to the forum
- Registration link included on the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce website calendar.

League of Women Voters-Snohomish County and Sandra Distelhorst, AAUW-WA state public policy chairperson generously shared time and resources from LOWV for shaping non-biased questions for the candidates. These were edited by AAUW-Walla Walla branch president Renee Hadley and member Danielle Garbe Reser before being finalized and shared with all candidates, the forum hosts (Renee, and the Walla Walla Valley Chamber CEO), and the forum moderator, ED of Communities in Schools Blue Mountain Region, Ruben Alvarado, approximately 3 weeks before the forum.

A "tech test" for all 9 attending candidates, 2 hosts, moderator, and 2 Q&A chat supervisors was held in the evening on September 27, one week prior to the forum; this was crucial in revealing a previously-unknown setting that prevented most folks from logging on. Although a very frustrating experience, everyone was able to log on within the next few days and the actual candidate forum experienced no known technical issues. You can view the recorded forum on the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce Zoom channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfTEDPINJVA>

The order of events for the live forum was: 6 pm start with 2 Port of Walla Walla port commissioner candidates; 6:30 pm start with 4 Walla Walla city council candidates; 7:15 pm start with 3 Walla Walla School Board director candidates. This order helped keep folks engaged until the most hotly publicly debated races for school board director, and allowed people to log on and off if need be to catch different races. We did announce the order of events at the beginning to respect attendees' time, and also announced the withdrawal of 2 city council candidates, at their (written) request.

Chat, video, and microphone functions were all disabled for the audience, but they were invited at the beginning of each segment to submit questions for the candidates via the Q&A function; this was set to be visible only to panelists (candidates, hosts, moderator, and Q&A supervisors); 2 Q&A supervisors took questions from here, edited them for clarity, and put them into the chat (visible only to panelists) for the moderator to ask to candidates at the end of the prepared question portion of each race's segment. Questions that were directed at a single candidate were responded to directly with "questions need to be answerable by all candidates". We were lucky to have great audience questions that were all appropriate & relevant to the offices, though we were prepared to block anyone who caused problems in the Q&A. Because of time constraints, not all candidates responded to all questions, both prepared & from the audience, but all candidates answered the same number of questions.

Feedback from candidates was all positive and we are looking forward to moving back to in-person, live forums this summer for the primaries (also recorded and then posted to YouTube.) A huge thank you to AAUW-Walla Walla president Renee Hadley, and members Rochelle Short, Danielle Garbe Reser, Karen Szall, Mary Cleveland, and AAUW-WA public policy chair Sandra Distelhorst and Snohomish County LOWV for all their time and energy in support of this event.

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## Calendar and Upcoming Events

### *AAUW-WA State Calendar*

The official calendar for AAUW-WA can be found on our website at:

<https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/activities-information/calendar>

If you wish to have a branch event added to the calendar,  
please send event details to [communications@aauw-wa.org](mailto:communications@aauw-wa.org)

You can also use the template provided in this [Branch Sharing Form](#).

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## General Information

### *AAUW-WA YouTube Channel*

Did you know that all videos, webinars and state meetings are available for you and your branch to view? All you need is this link that will take you to our private YouTube channel.

[AAUW-WA YouTube Video Playlist](#)

If you have any problems accessing the videos, or questions about the content or how to use them with your branch, please contact Mary Ross at [communications@aauw-wa.org](mailto:communications@aauw-wa.org)

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## *AAUW-WA Member Web Sections*

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## ***Publishing Schedule***

Please send articles and images for the state newsletter to Judy Peasley at [evergreenleader@aauw-wa.org](mailto:evergreenleader@aauw-wa.org)

- **Please send photos separately - do not embed them in your document**
- Please use MS Word format; Font: Calibri size 12
- Articles with images, limit to 450 words; without images, limit to 550 words

We are hoping that most articles can meet these guidelines. If you have a special article that exceeds this limit, we understand, but ask that you do your best to limit the article length.

**\*\*Remember that written permission for publishing is required from any person shown in a photo that is published. The branch or officer submitting the photo is responsible for getting and keeping the signatures of the people granting permission to publish.**

**Evergreen Leader issues are published on the 15th of each month. Articles submitted for publication are due by the 8th of each month** Please send the articles to Judy Peasley at [evergreenleader@aauw-wa.org](mailto:evergreenleader@aauw-wa.org) The newsletter will be reviewed by our new AAUW-WA President, Emily Hitchens, before publishing - and as always, available on our website [AAUW-WA State](http://AAUW-WA State)



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