



## The Evergreen Leader

AAUW Washington Newsletter  
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**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



I like to listen to KUOW first thing in the morning. Most recently, it was an interesting interview with an author who said that she could not write in the spring of 2020 during the pandemic. However, a line by Virginia Woolf spoke her true feelings, "It was an uncertain spring". So, based on this statement, I am saying "It was an uncertain fall." Which speaks to my and many of your same feelings, especially considering current world conflicts and the soon to be Thanksgiving holiday. What to be thankful for? Every Saturday morning at 7:30 am, I call a former colleague who now lives in Idaho. We mostly end up talking about the state of the world. We are both thankful for this brief time; me because I am keeping up with a friend and her, because there's no one to share some of the same ideas, opinions, and concerns. So, I am thankful for this, everyone needs an outlet!

Last month I focused on 'inspiring' as a physical, relaxation practice. Observing and participating in various activities is also inspiring! I took a moment to scan the web site and the last four Evergreen Leader Newsletters. We can be thankful for our AAUW-WA Communications Team's work on the web page and the production of our newsletter. Both tell the world what is happening across our state. Whether is it having candidate forums, celebrating 50- and 75-year anniversaries, exploring Diversity, Equity and Inclusion through book studies and speakers from various backgrounds, learning about opportunities through our Fall webinar series or having Java breaks with branch members. Thank you to all who are planning and participating in these events. We all need to participate in something greater than ourselves whether it's by reading, listening, voting, zooming, sharing, supporting, and learning.

Last November, Mary Williams shared in the president's newsletter that through the dint of hard labor of several board members, AAUW-WA continues to be an official 501c4. She also called for a Sunday Summit to discuss our future.

I get to participate on several Board committees or teams and exciting things are being proposed and happening whether it is an AAUW-WA branch 'toolbox', strategic thinking about public policies, or the active planning for Tech Trek. All are focused on the future of AAUW-WA.

So, find the space to be thankful for our opportunities even in these challenging times.

*Emily*

## State Presidents' Meeting

If you are currently serving as president of your branch, we invite you to join AAUW-WA president Emily Hitchens for a lively discussion with other AAUW branch presidents in WA State.

The next meeting will be on **Monday, November 27th**

Join the 10:30 am Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81926250093?pwd=bllQeVp0anNrZm4vVS9OZVJ4SUVBUT09>

Meeting ID: 819 2625 0093

Passcode: 690655

OR

Join the 7 pm Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82787791201?pwd=ZDICSHFnd1IWWjRKR0pUTVkJ3aFBtZz09>

Meeting ID: 827 8779 1201

Passcode: 995815

## 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 have been held on the **second Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.** Tickets are \$15 for single sessions and registration is through Eventbrite. **You still have time to enjoy the 2 final webinars!**

[Register Here!](#)

Here are our final webinars for this series:

**TONIGHT! 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 Lost Cost of the Gender Pay Gap on Washington Women". [AAUW-WA YouTube Video Playlist](#)

#### *Past 2023 Webinars*

*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.

# My AHA Moment

We want to hear your story of an “aha” AAUW moment, a time when you had a sudden heartwarming flash of happiness, gratitude, pride, excitement, or hilarity because you’re part of this organization.

Keep it under 75 words and send it with your name and branch to [evergreenleader@aauw-wa.org](mailto:evergreenleader@aauw-wa.org)

## Membership Corner

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

Mischievous Internet Gremlins\* caused trouble at our Monday (11/6/23) Membership Meeting. The Zoom meeting started but no one showed up. Then Jeanne, Membership Director, and Mary Ross, Communication Director, started getting phone calls and text messages. No one could login to the meeting! 15 minutes later the meeting finally happened with 9 of us in attendance. Mary Ross with her techy expertise figured out the problem and got us going. A Big Thanks to Mary!

Having an expert available is a relief! A luxury! A joy! A gift! Did you know our new Branch ToolBox will have a folder of expertise? It will have a list of members from our branches willing to share their valuable knowledge and expertise with others. Do you have a skill or expertise you are willing to share with others? Contact Jeanne at [membership@aauw-wa.org](mailto:membership@aauw-wa.org)

Other news from our meeting:

- Zoom is using AI to provide a fairly decent summary of Zoom Meetings. Monday, we used that feature and with some editing the meeting’s summary was good and it was shared with the branch VPs and others on our list.
- Because of the holidays – Thanksgiving & Christmas – there will only be one Membership Meeting for November and December. Two Meetings a month will start up again in January 2024.
- The days and times of our monthly Zoom meetings: first Monday of each month at 12:30; the second meeting of the month will be flexible until we find the best day and time for those who cannot attend on the first Monday of each month. Watch for future info and Zoom invitations. Suggestion for January – a Wednesday afternoon.

Would you like to see the meeting summary generated by Zoom AI? Do you have suggestions or comments about membership issues? Contact Jeanne at [membership@aauw-wa.org](mailto:membership@aauw-wa.org)

Our next meeting is Monday, December 4, 2023, at 12:30. Please join us. The recurring link is below and is always in our AAUW-WA website calendar. See calendar url -

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

Membership Meeting, December 4, 2023, 12:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81312331083?pwd=ZE9qTXdXblJyQUI4S0F0K3hm aEZTQT09>

Meeting ID: 813 1233 1083

Passcode: 649306

\*Internet Gremlins - those pesky little dudes that cause internet troubles!

## Communications

Mary Ross

AAUW-WA Communications Director

[communications@aauw-wa.org](mailto:communications@aauw-wa.org)

Jodi Forsell and I recently did an online meeting on "Zoom Tips and Tricks," covering these topics:

- How to change your Zoom settings and why it is important to have a personal Zoom account, even a free one
- Adding and changing Zoom backgrounds
- Renaming during a Zoom meeting
- How to use the Reactions and Raise Hand features
- New features in Zoom Chat
- Reducing background noise, as a Zoom host and as a participant
- Fun ways that branches are using Zoom meetings
- How your branch can use the AAUW WA Zoom Pro account

[Here's a link where you can view a recording of the session.](#) (Use Passcode: 5q.&t&eq)

I briefly talked about screen-sharing and the Zoom annotation tools. If you want a more in-depth how-to on these, email me.

Have you heard about the [new Zoom AI features](#)? These include meeting summaries and enhanced Whiteboard content and capabilities. Explore these if you have a Pro account.

A recent Membership Meeting used the [AI function's meeting summary](#) as the basis for detailed notes of the meeting. See the Membership Corner for more details on that AI-generated summary.

I created a Zoom background with an AAUW logo (see image below), so email me if you want that file.

Next up for some sharing of communications expertise: "Energize Your Image(s)." This will be an online session on December 7, on how to create and use images in your newsletters, social media, websites, and publicity. See below for more information and a link to free registration.





This image can be used as a background for your Zoom meetings.



## **Energize Your Image(s)**

Thursday, December 7, 7 p.m.

With a touch of creativity and digital media creation, you can expand your branch's reach.

Join Elena Cervantes and Mary Ross for an online how-to session (via Zoom) on using free and low-cost tools to create or edit images for your branch website, social media, or other user interactions. Learn how digital images can improve your presence while highlighting your branch.

We'll explore Canva, royalty-free photo sources, and tools on your Mac or PC.  
[Register at this link.](#)



Kay McMurry  
Legacy Circle Liaison  
legacycircle@aauw-wa.org

***Now and in the Future***  
*Be an Asset to AAUW!*

YOU can have a lasting impact on AAUW beyond your involvement right now. Consider including a donation in your financial plan! This can be done in several ways including a Charitable Gift Annuity, CRT Trust or a donation (specific dollar amount or percentage of assets) in your will.

For more information, email [planned-giving@aauw.org](mailto:planned-giving@aauw.org) to discuss your options.





## Public Policy

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

The 2024 Legislative Session is a short session (2-months) and starts **January 8<sup>th</sup>**.

AAUW-WA Lobby day (virtual) is **January 22, 2024** followed by Lobby Week January 22– January 26

Click [HERE](#) to find Lobby Day updates on our AAUW-WA website. Remember, our website is a great resource for Public Policy updates and links to key resources.

Our Public Policy team will have an agenda for Lobby Day presentations by December 1<sup>st</sup>, though we won't have a list of Lobby Day bills until later. New bills can't be introduced until 30 days before the session starts.

Washington state has a two-year process (like Congress), so any bill introduced in 2023 that didn't pass, automatically gets rolled over to 2024 with the same bill number and goes back to the house of origin where it was first introduced.

The Public Policy team is busy reviewing 2023 bills (there are a lot of good bills that didn't pass) and reaching out to key legislators to learn what new bills they plan to introduce. We are also learning a lot from legislative committee work sessions. These sessions often provide an update on legislation that passed and/or cover an issue where new legislation is anticipated. For example, the House Education committee work session in December will review the *School Safety and Student Well-Being Advisory Committee* report. We are reviewing several bills on this issue as possible lobby day bills. The Senate Early education and K-12 committee work session included an overview of *artificial Intelligence, media literacy, misinformation, disinformation*. There are bills on this issue we are also reviewing.

The Public Policy committee is meeting weekly now - Tuesdays at noon (see event calendar for the Zoom link). We are also meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month in the evening at 6:30 pm for those who can't make the Tuesday meetings.

Advocating for gender equity includes electing policymakers who support gender equity. AAUW national is putting together a 2024 Voter Education Toolkit. **Below are some additional helpful resources:**

- [Click HERE](#) to sign up for AAUW-WA's Legislative Update
- [Click HERE](#) to sign up for AAUW National's monthly newsletter and Action Alerts.
- [Click HERE](#) to sign up for Two Minute Activist

## Tech Trek

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

### *Vision for the Future*

The staff at Tech Trek would like to thank everybody for their continued support for the program and the positive visioning meeting that was held on October 11th. During the meeting, we were able to establish two new committees, The Planning and Recruiting Committees. Committees serve to work on tasks that need to be completed prior to camp. If you would like to join a committee, please reach out to Krislyn Davis at [Krislyn711@gmail.com](mailto:Krislyn711@gmail.com)

The current estimated cost of Tech Trek is \$1700 per camper. The staff lineup includes Krislyn Davis as a Camp Director, Jen Dalziel as Curriculum Director, Allyanna Hackenberg as Volunteer Coordinator, and Trish Wilson as the Students and Families Coordinator. Laura Tucker will be returning as a camp teacher.

With the retirement of Karen Manelis, we are searching to fill the very big shoes of Program Director. This is an essential role that includes overseeing committees, seeing to pre-camp planning, and leading the Tech Trek Administrative Team (Directors and Coordinators). Since this person will be the point of contact for Directors and Coordinators and the overseer of tasks, it is imperative that this role is filled immediately. Please email Karen Manelis as soon as possible if you're interested. We'd like to have this position filled by the end of next week. Please contact Karen at [techtrek@aauw-wa.org](mailto:techtrek@aauw-wa.org)

### *Request for End of Year Donations to the AAUW WA Tech Trek Program*

It is that time of year. You know, the one where you suddenly realize you are of a certain age and have a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your IRA. If you take the money out, even if you chose to use it for a charity, you will pay federal income tax on the donation. But...if you instruct your investment agency to send a donation directly to a 501(c) 3 charity, no taxes are required. You meet the federal requirement, do good for an organization and, oddly enough, you save money. There are many great charities to donate to but there is one close to the heart of many of us, Tech Trek. The camp has numerous expenses that your donation could help defray. Consider making a tax-free donation before the end of the year from your RMD. The tax ID number for your donation is 27-333060 and the mailing address to send it to (do not send online if you wish to make your deduction from your RMD) is:

AAUW-WA Special Projects Fund  
P.O. Box 1665

Bellevue, WA 98009

## Branch Events



AAUW-WA Online  
Melissa Johnsen  
AAUW-Online  
johnsen.melissa@gmail.com

'LET FREEDOM READ'\*

### The Unprecedented Book Banning Movement and Why We Need to Get Involved

AAUW-Wa Online Branch Program  
December 6, 2023, 5:30 pm

Come and participate in this thought-provoking discussion of the history, strategies and threats posed by the 21st century book banning movement. Key areas of exploration will include the historical context of book banning movements in the United States, the status of book banning and educational reform initiatives, the evolving politicization of these issues, and what you can do about it.

Scope of the problem: Between January 1 and August 31, 2023, the American Library Association (ALA) reported 695 attempts to censor library materials and services and documented challenges to 1,915 unique titles. This marks a significant 20% increase over the record setting year of 2022. *A substantial portion of these banned books are either written by or centered around members of the LGBTQIA+ community and people of color.*

Our distinguished panelists on the front line of this conflict over books are:

- Kimberly (John) Cassetto – Walla Walla High School, Library Media Specialist. Kimberly has been awarded the Walla Walla Chamber of

Commerce 2023 Educator of the Year award, a district Staff Achievement Award, and recognition from WA Secretary of State Steve Hobbs.

- Gavin Downing – Kentridge High School, Teacher-Librarian. As a school librarian, he was the proud recipient of the Candace Morgan Intellectual Freedom award in 2022 for his fight against book bans. For his work in equity in education, he won the Student Involvement Award from Washington Education Association in 2023.
- Ava Kirtley – Former Student at Walla Walla High School, currently a University Student. As a high school Junior, unwilling to let a group of people who wanted to ban certain library books go unchallenged, Ava established a Banned Book Club and activated her community to get involved.

To attend, please [Register Here](#)

Upon registration, a Zoom link will be shared in the RSVP evite. For those who cannot attend in real-time, we are recording the discussion, and the link will be available upon request with a password for security. The text of the panel presentation will also be posted on the AAUW WA Online website.

*\* The American Library Association theme for 2023 Book Banning Week in honor of record-breaking efforts to censor books now sweeping the nation's libraries and schools. 'Let Freedom Read'.*

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



## Federal Way

*Joan Cronk  
AAUW-Federal Way*

## Public Safety

On Saturday October 14 Virginia King, MJ Garlick and Joan Cronk attended a program at Christ Lutheran Church in Federal Way hosted by the Federal Way branch of AAUW, on the topic of *Personal Safety*.

Guest speaker *Tonya Seaberry, Des Moines Community Police Officer*, gave an informative, entertaining and inclusive talk about personal safety. With topics like, "What Does Personal Safety Mean, Knowing Your Surroundings and Being Aware of Them", there was no shortage of valuable information and time for questions from the audience.

"The world isn't as safe as I would like it to be," Seaberry said. She encouraged everyone who finds themselves in a tight spot to be assertive. "Your voice is your best defense," she said, adding in the reminder to ask ourselves, "What am I capable and able of doing?" Shouting "Get back! You are too close" and "I am

not interested,” are good tools. She reminded the group to use our competent voice - not our mommy voice.

Setting boundaries and checking nearby exits are also important tools. “Your goal is not to be in a life or death choice. It is okay to be rude” she stressed. She said women should always scan who is around and be alert and aware of surroundings.

Most women have much larger purses than they need, and with them slung over their shoulder or in a grocery cart they could end up as a target, she explained, adding that our phones are really an important lifeline.

There was no shortage of good advice and the interaction with guests and questions and answers in the presentation left us all feeling better informed and hopefully a little safer.



## Seattle

*Tonna Kutner*  
AAUW-Seattle  
tonnakut@gmail.com

### ***Beyond Land Acknowledgement 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/tZEsdUGurDoqG9b87cwqtF6XNN5UF6fteKD>

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>

## 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](#).

## 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)

### *AAUW-WA Member Web Sections*

*Password: Evergreen*

### *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](#)