



The Evergreen Leader

AAUW Washington Newsletter

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President's Message

Emily Hitchens

AAUW-WA President
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This is the question: how does a weary world celebrate the holiday season? It is hard not to hear and see the news, sad news going 'round the world.' I ask myself, how should I respond, with guilt, with avoidance, with denial or with hope?

As I review my AAUW-WA activities, I am hopeful, busy with confirming the Coordinators Camp Insurance for Tech Trek, working through the financial issues with Tech Trek with the ad hoc review committee and the committed volunteers, learning what it means to 'vet bills' that may be coming before the legislature, exploring ways to connect with Members-at-Large with the Membership Team, listening to what the Branch Presidents are saying in the monthly Branch President's meeting who would like to explore regional face-to-face gatherings, and also doing what I like to do! Make a raffle basket for the Seattle branch with the theme of Conserving Nature, bake fruitcakes and share them with my neighbors, invite my family to the Rainier Symphony holiday concert, see the Christmas at Pemberly at the Taproot Theatre (I am a Jane Austin fan.), support the Outreach Social Justice Team at my church, and 'oh' clean the house (not my favorite activity) and decorate! But it is all good . . . to be involved both with purpose and pleasure.

Also, please look and see the unexpected. The picture above, my husband and I with Santa Claus holding Gavin our new West Highland Terrier was such a happenstance when buying greens at our local Zenith Holland Nursery! Gavin discovered Santa because there was a little Corgi nearby with whom he wanted to make friends. There was Santa! So why not have a picture?

Take care you all and find a space for reflection, sharing, and hope.

Emily

State Presidents' Meetings

If you are currently serving as president of your branch, we invite you to join AAUW-WA president Emily Hitchens for some lively discussions with other AAUW branch presidents in WA State. These meetings have typically been on the fourth Monday of each month, with a choice of either 10:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.

The fourth Monday meetings, which would have taken place on January 22, have been moved to a new date, due to Lobby Day. **The next meetings will be on Monday, January 29.** Zoom links will be posted on the [AAUW-WA calendar](#).

State News

Communications

Mary Ross
AAUW-WA Communications Director
communications@aauw-wa.org

Elena Cervantes and I enjoyed working with branch members who wanted to energize their images. (December 7, via Zoom) There was a lot of interest in [Canva](#), a free online tool for creating and editing images. It's powerful for use in social media because it has image templates for Facebook and Instagram. It can also be used to create images for websites and newsletters in any format, including webmail.

If you want to view the Zoom recording, [use this link](#). Passcode: uX8d*\$F

Elena has generously offered to help members get started using Canva. You can email her, elena.cervantes1@gmail.com.

"This Week in Olympia" is the name of our 2024 legislative updates, with a new look to help you quickly scan areas of high interest and follow up on the Action Alerts.

[Use this link](#) to sign up for AAUW-WA 2024 Legislative Updates, *This Week in Olympia*

Your feedback is always welcome! Help us structure AAUW-WA communications and training to meet your needs.



THIS WEEK IN OLYMPIA



News for the 2024 Legislative Session in WA State

Membership Corner

Jeanne Nygard
AAUW-WA Membership Director
membership@aauw-wa.org

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

- Because of the holidays - 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

Our next meeting is Monday, January 15, 2024, 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, January 15, 2024, 12:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81312331083?pwd=ZE9qTXdXblJyQUl4S0FOK3hmaEZTQT09>

Meeting ID: 813 1233 1083

Passcode: 649306

AHA Member Moments



Leslie Roubal - Port Townsend AAUW

Two AHA moments spring to mind during my nearly 20 years with AAUW. I was wonderfully surprised to be *Named Gift Honoree* for my volunteer efforts, first at AAUW Redlands CA, then at AAUW Port Townsend WA. Such an honor means that \$4,000 has been donated to national AAUW to help support this organization.

Yeah AAUW!

See more AHA moments from other Port Townsend *Named Gift Honorees*!

<https://pt-wa.aauw.net/honorwomen/honorees/>

Bella Smith - AAUW Walla Walla

My AHA moment was when I encountered Melissa See's first book, *You, Me and Our Heartstrings*, during a book sort. I appreciated the disability representation in this book. After reading the premise of her second book, I bought it when it came out. It exceeded my expectations! Not only did I find the asexual representation I was looking for, but I found a new author to admire, and all of this came through my AAUW organization.

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

Public Policy

Sandra Distelhorst
AAUW-WA Public Policy Director
publicpolicy@aauw-wa.org

The 2024 legislative session starts on January 8. It is a short 60-day session. **Lobby Day is January 22**, only a few days before bills must pass their committee or they are dead. See more details about Lobby Day in the next section.

Early action: We will have some early actions for you to take before Lobby Day, so please sign up for "This Week in Olympia," our 2024 Legislative Update, right now! [Click HERE](#)

Advocacy tools: We're preparing a video for branches on How to Advocate for AAUW-WA that will walk

you through the most common questions we get: "How do I track a bill?", "How do I sign in PRO for a committee hearing?", and more. Have a question you want included? Email Sandra at publicpolicy@aauw-wa.org.

Nancy Sapiro, our lobbyist, will join the Public Policy Team at noon on December 19 to brainstorm about our strategy for 2024. All advocates are welcome!

National news:

Pay Gap: WA state Congressional District and Legislative District data is here! See the [WA State Pay Gap Data Spreadsheet](#). The spreadsheet also includes data on the percentage of female households (single and single with kids) below the poverty level by CD and LD.

The rate varied a lot. In CD1 it was 67 cents for every dollar compared to CD9's 87 cents. The range in LDs was 57 cents to 94 cents. We also have data on housing by gender coming soon.

Title IX – The Title IX revised regulations are now at the OMB going through technical review.

ERA – All official Branch Public Policy Chairs received an invitation from national AAUW to join in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the ERA being introduced into Congress. Check your email from Meghan Kissell.

Happy Holidays!

The Public Policy Committee is meeting weekly now - Tuesdays at noon and Wednesdays at 6:30 pm for those who can't make the Tuesday meetings.

These meeting links can always be found on the AAUW-WA website calendar. [Click HERE](#) to see the calendar

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 2024 Legislative Update, *This Week in Olympia*
- [Click HERE](#) to sign up for AAUW National's monthly newsletter and Action Alerts.
- [Click HERE](#) to sign up for Two Minute Activist

We're Stronger Together!



Lobby Day 2024

Washington State is hosting our annual Lobby Day on January 22 from 9-12:30.

The session will open early at 8:30 for a "meet and greet" that will be an opportunity for you to interact with others, but this half hour will not be led by any one individual. Please join us at 8:30 if you enjoy this more casual interaction with members across the state.

2024 Lobby Day will be held virtually on Zoom to encourage all members to join us. We hope you will make time for this important session!

Lobby Day speakers will discuss

- Voting
- Media Literacy
- Girls at Risk
- Various topics from our lobbyist Nancy Sapiro

Cost is \$10.00

[Click HERE](#) to register or click the link below

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/aauw-wa-lobby-day-tickets-774031417807?aff=oddtcreator>

Stay Informed with Legislative Updates!



Updates for the 2024 Legislative Session

Our AAUW-WA legislative consultant, **Nancy Sapiro**, provides regular news and updates for our state membership during the legislative session. If you are interested in receiving these updates for 2024, please click on the link below.

[Click HERE](#) to sign up for AAUW-WA 2024 Legislative Updates, *This Week in Olympia*

Did you receive the legislative updates in 2023? **Sign up again in 2024** to continue receiving these informative weekly emails.

2023-24 Webinar Series

*Jodi Forsell
AAUW-WA Programs
programs@aauw-wa.org*

Our 2023 Webinar Series, **Opportunity Matters**, is complete. We want to thank our team for pulling these speakers together to discuss such powerful issues. In setting up this series of webinars, they looked for representation from around the state, in diverse communities, small towns, and rural areas. Their goal was to have a future focus, as well as examples of current practice, to showcase the opportunities that matter, that will make the vision a reality.

Information about each of the webinars is listed below, and 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 talked briefly about upcoming legislation. They followed with Sandra talking with Dr Gina Masullo about her research on political engagement and opportunities to advance gender equity through legislation and community action. Dr. Masullo is the author of "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](#), shared 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](#), described how they create opportunities to read and empower women through literacy.

Completed - 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 addressed the shortage of healthcare providers in rural areas in our state.

Completed - December 12: Grace Yoo, executive director of the Washington State Women's Commission, established in 2018 by Governor Inslee. She discussed the work of the commission and providing opportunities for women in leadership.

Branch Events



Highline

Emily Hitchens
AAUW-Highline
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Intellectual Freedom Panel Highlights

Amity Addrissi, from KING 5's New Day NW, moderated a *Celebration of the Freedom to Read: Intellectual Freedom Panel* on Monday, November 13, at Renton Technical College, sponsored by the King County Library System and AAUW Highline Branch. Co-President of the Highline Branch, Kay Crane, also a librarian, gave an informative introduction. (See picture above)

The panel included local educators and librarians: Dr. Tanisha Brandon-Felder from Highline Schools, Clevell Roseboro II from Renton Technical College, Jessica Russell from Sno-Isle Libraries and Tracey Thompson from KCLS.

Dr. Brandon-Felder made a point that readers need to read stories about themselves. If a child does not read something that relates to their lived experience, the child feels ignored. Children also need to read about others' experiences so that they can understand their situations.

A few of the books mentioned included the *Frankly, Frannie* series by A.J. Stern with titles such as *Rocking Out*, *Miss Fortune* and *Here Comes Trouble*. Other books mentioned were *Odd Man Out*, a memoir of a minor league baseball player, by Matt McCarthy; *Gender Queer*, a personal exploration meant for readers 16 years and up, by Maia Kobabe; and *You Should See Me in a Crown*, a story about a black and poor girl growing up in a wealthy mid-western town, by Leah Johnson.

Jessica Russell and Tracey Thompson shared the way libraries develop policies of book adoption that reflect their constituencies. "Books can tell you that you are not alone." For example, they do a DEI analysis, a world language assessment, and review circulation patterns as well as patron selections. Clevell Roseboro II, administrator for the academic library at Renton Technical College, said the library there is focused on college courses so it is very specialized but still needs to have all sorts of information.

All agreed that intellectual freedom includes stories that mirror and reflect all persons. It is a First Amendment right: *Freedom of religion, speech and the press; rights of assembly and petition*. Wide reading prepares one for debate and affords access to information. The public cannot censor a book

based on viewpoints from seventy years ago under McCarthyism. The vague statement “harmful to minors” is inadequate.

Libraries are being overwhelmed with challenges. Four states have criminalized books. You can advocate for libraries by participating in library guilds and friends groups. Participate in educational processes by attending school board meetings.

The American Library Association has a publication called *Read These Banned Books: A Journal and 52 Week Reading Challenge*. The program was filmed, so you can watch it with this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-171o3B52E>

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

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

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

- **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 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](#)



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