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November 2023

Shhh. Don't tell us.



Dear Randa,

Welcome to the *California Connection*, the monthly missive sent to every member from your state organization for a quick and informal read of things to know and do in AAUW!

Things to Know



The grasshopper blew it. Be sure your branch doesn't. Be ant-like this winter and start thinking about which successful activity you'll submit in spring for the AAUW California [Branch Activity of the Year](#) award. You may not be able to lift twenty times your body weight (stop multiplying that in your head!), but surely your colony is stockpiling an award-worthy program that is novel, inspiring, relevant, and simple enough for other branches to do. Remember the moral of the story and check out the [application](#) now. And be sure to join us next month for our continuing discussion of the powerful symbolism of bugs in allegorical literature and AAUW newsletters.

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Home run!! Yes, we know the baseball season has wrapped up. Yes, we know the Rangers clinched the World Series win for the first time in 52 years. We're impressed. But hey, sports fans, AAUW has big wins too. And we didn't wait 52 years to score them. AAUW California's Public Policy team slid into home with 86.3% of our priority legislation being signed into law! Check out our hitting stats [HERE](#). We had a strong bench with all the volunteers who stepped up to the plate on Lobby Day to personally educate local lawmakers on the bills that matter to us. We didn't get a shiny trophy the size of the Chrysler Building, but keep your cleats on, because Public Policy never takes a seventh-inning stretch. Mercifully, however, this clichéd article will.

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On the count of three, please stand up. Now, bow gracefully and blush modestly at the sound of applause. It is because of you, our members, that Tech Trek completed its 25th successful year inspiring girls to play with Erlenmeyer flasks. More than 250 heroes from 110 branches served as camp

directors, treasurers, dorm moms, teachers, and workshop presenters, or in their branches as coordinators, essay scorers, interviewers, school pitchmen, fundraisers, and just plain cheerleaders. If you missed out or couldn't find your pom poms, watch for opportunities to be a part of Tech Trek at your branch or at a camp. Here's one: We need a state [financial liaison](#) to serve as overall treasurer and provide oversight of Tech Trek's finances. Put down your pom poms, dig out *QuickBooks for Dummies*, and contact techtrek@aauw-ca.org.

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Things to Do

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November has a lot of interesting days: Election Day, Veteran's Day, and Thanksgiving Day. There's also Black Friday. That's when you can buy a wifi-enabled robotic back scratcher that sings *She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain When She Comes* and fries brussel sprouts for 29 cents. But there's another kind of black day coming right 'round the corner: April 15th. That's when the taxman cometh. You can save on those taxes by making a year-end donation to your favorite charitable organization, ahem... us. If you're 73 or older as of January 1, 2023, and don't itemize, you may reduce your taxable income by making a Qualified Charitable Donation from your retirement fund to a qualified 501(c)(3) and even count it as part of your Required Minimum Distribution. Conveniently, we have two suggestions: donate to National AAUW (contact planned-giving@aauw.org) or to an AAUW California program through the AAUW CA [Special Projects Fund](#). Just be sure the donation is paid directly from the IRA to the charity. Small print: Check with your tax advisor. Check with your IRA custodian for the right procedures and paperwork. Check for a better deal on the back scratcher. We saw it for 18 cents.

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2023 Fellows and Grant Recipients



Sick of binge-watching crime dramas and dystopian science fiction series? Don't turn to Lassie reruns. Instead, be inspired by watching [videos](#) of our very own California AAUW Fund fellows and grant recipients discussing the innovative work our contributions helped sponsor. Trust us: these scholars can make subjects like vitamin B6, cross-body site microbiome ectopy, and E.coli as fascinating as the time Timmy and Lassie saved the farm from a grasshopper invasion (1960 S6.E20 - The Grasshopper and the Ant). See this newsletter's first article for further reference.

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Plato philosophized, "There is no harm in repeating a good thing." We think he was quite brainy and have followed his advice. So [Gov Trek](#) has launched its second year! Once again, we will address the shortage of women in the halls of power with our online program exposing high school junior and senior girls to careers in elected office and public service. It's instructional, interactive, and inspirational. Oh, and it's free! If you were never elected "Most Likely to Succeed," now's your chance to make up for it. Pass along the [registration information](#) and explainer [video](#) to a high school girl you know. She may give you a cabinet position when she's president.

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My AAUW 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 cc@aauw-ca.org.



Years before I returned to college, I'd heard about AAUW. I had worked on a project with a retired college dean. Eventually she took me to an AAUW meeting. I loved how my curious brain reacted to all of these lifelong learning women. I returned to college to finally finish my degree majoring in pre-law at the University of California.

It took a grand total of 21 years of on and off study to get that degree at age 40! The first thing I did was join AAUW! I'm still giddy with excitement!

Jane Parks-McKay
Los Gatos/Saratoga and Santa Cruz Branches



AAUW's mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.
AAUW.org

AAUW California's mission: AAUW California facilitates California branches in meeting the vision and mission of AAUW by providing programs, education and resources.
www.aauw-ca.org



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