

## High School Scholars Recognition Event set May 10 at Spark Museum



The annual Bellingham AAUW High School Scholars Recognition program will be exciting and well attended by local students from 13 Whatcom County High Schools.

Two schools invited for the first time to select students for their excellence in Science, Technology and Math, are St. Paul's Academy and Windward High School.

Speakers for the program will be Nikki Larson, Associate Professor, Plastics and Composites Engineering, WWU, and Sarah Greenstreet, Ph.D. candidate in Astronomy, University of British Columbia. Both speakers currently live in Bellingham. We are pleased that young, successful women in the STEM fields are eager to talk to our scholars.

The event starts at 10 a.m. at the SPARK Museum of Electrical Invention on Bay Street, downtown Bellingham. Public parking is available in the Parkade one block south of Bay St. **Members, please bring 2 or 3 dozen finger food type appetizers or desserts for the event.** Over 100 guests are expected!

Come for this fun and rewarding event. We need to show the scholars and their families that we care about education!

—Carol Simmer and Sharlene Joshua,  
High School Scholars Co-chairs



**Sneak Preview:** At the May 10 meeting at the Spark Museum, Cherilyn Jackson will display this quilt, which she has donated to be raffled off at the June wine-tasting event. The pattern is *OEzii*, a Mongolian symbol for long life and prosperity. It is put on the doors of yurts to ward off wild beasts and evil spirits! Cherilyn has been quilting for about 12 years.

**More about the wine-tasting on Page 6.**

## Brigid Collins speaker issues an invitation to AAUW, and tells us about a marvelous app

*April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Byron Manering, the speaker at our April meeting, gave us interesting statistics about child abuse and invited us to attend a "Stewards of Children" two-hour workshop: "From Darkness to Light" educates adults on how to protect all children, by increasing awareness and sharing practical tools to use when we see abuse.*

The class can be brought to a group, or individuals can sign up at the Brigid Collins Web page. Cost is \$10 per person.

Manering is Executive Director of the Brigid Collins Family Support Center, a non-profit agency formed in 1990 to serve families throughout Whatcom County. The founders were judges, policemen, and others who saw the need for a multi-disciplinary approach to dealing with the issue of abuse. Justice needed to be served, but also, vulnerable individuals needed to be protected and healed.



*Byron Manering with our Program Co-Chair, Pam Sankey, who arranged the speaking engagement for us.*

Manering, who holds a Masters of Social Work from the University of Washington, gave us a feeling for the scope of the abuse problem and how it affects society, with several statistics, such as these:

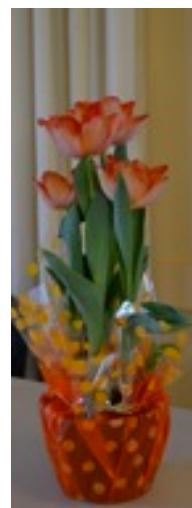
- 85% of women in prison were abused as children
- 20% of college women are raped
- 7% of men in college attempt or complete rape
- 40% of rapists were abused as children
- 33% of college rapists also offended as juveniles

He also gave us an overview of how treatment has developed and improved over time, reminding us that Title IX includes a provision that colleges must take steps to prevent rape.

Now, Brigid Collins serves over 2000 children and families annually, and is a leader in developing evidence-based practices to provide healing and prevent abuse from happening.

Manering also introduced us to a smartphone app, Circle of 6, which is a wonderful use of technology to keep

people safe. With Circle of 6, a person can connect with her friends to stay close, stay safe and prevent violence before it happens. She chooses five close friends or family, and if she needs help getting home, needs an interruption, etc., two touches of icons lets her circle know where she is and how they can help. Although developed for college students, it could be useful for anyone.



Member profile.....

## You call this retired?? Jo Pullen has long list of activities

by Gwen Parker

While being interviewed about her life, Jo Pullen rolls her eyes and says, "Woman with Multiple Sclerosis lives alone with her cat!" -- But that doesn't begin to touch who Jo Pullen really is.

If you were lucky, you were in the audience a few years ago for a performance of "Stories from Jim and Jo." The "Jo" is our own AAUW member, who not only performed in the event, but also initiated the creation of the show. After seeing a show produced by Pam Kuntz, founder of a local dance company, Jo approached her to ask if she would ever consider doing a show about people living with disabilities. Receiving just a polite answer, she did not expect the call that came within a month, about collaborating on a new work.

The performance is about what it is like to live with a chronic illness: in Jo's case, MS. For the "Jim" of the show, Jim Lortz, it is Parkinson's Disease. Part play and part dance, the performance is powerful and moving - and it shows that a person cannot be defined by an illness.

### Seattle Native

Born in Seattle and raised in nearby Bellevue, Jo went off to college at University of Utah, and studied ballet for a year. She eventually came back to Seattle and took only two years to earn a B.A. in interdisciplinary studies from Seattle University. She then took a Master's in Social Work from University of Washington. One of her first jobs was working to evaluate

public housing programs for a Federal agency.

At age 31, she was working in contract compliance for the City of Seattle. That was when she first was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. "So, I have been living with this disease for over half my life," she says.



Robin Dude photo

*Jo Pullen and Jim Lortz onstage.*

She was told she would not be able to work, or have children. In fact, she did not have children, which is a regret, but she did continue to work and also added a paralegal degree to her resume.

Jo eventually went to work for DSHS - the Washington Department of Social and Health Services, as a licensor, traveling throughout two counties to inspect adult family homes.

Having MS means cycles of good days and bad days, health-wise, and eventually Jo did have to retire - "Earlier than I wanted," she says.

*(continued on page 4)*

## Member profile...Jo Pullen

*(continued from page 3)*

Jo moved to Bellingham about 12 years ago, and not long after that, divorced her husband and traded her house for an apartment. One of the traumas in that move



was for her cat, Mini-me, who had to adapt to being an “inside cat,” after having the run of a yard. “There was a lot of ripped upholstery for a time,” Jo says. (The Mini-me name refers to the cat’s mother - not to Jo!)

A few years ago, Jo started to use a cane. She explained that she had resisted it, out of “a bit of vanity.” However, her doctor persuaded her that the energy she was expending to stay upright could be conserved and used for other things, if she would just use the cane for a little support.

And energy is what Jo needs, for her long list of volunteer activities. Staying true to her social services background, she has been a vocal advocate for persons who lack access to health care. She has worked with United for National Health Care, a non-profit group that has called for a single-payer health insurance program.

Now that Obamacare (the Affordable Health Care Act) has taken effect, the group has refocused on educating the public about the parts of the program that need to be improved. The group also holds monthly programs on health issues, such as how to access Veteran’s health care.

Jo also volunteers at Paws Awhile, the Whatcom Humane Society gift store in Fairhaven, and works on social justice issues for the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship. She is an avid reader, and was drawn into AAUW through our Adelante! book group, of which she is a dedicated member. She says she is “hooked on Masterpiece Theater,” and loves jazz and classical music.

Which brings us back to her college ballet classes: Although she has “graduated” to using two walking sticks, she is once again dancing, in a class for people with neurological conditions. Started by Pam Kuntz, the dancer with whom she collaborated to produce “Jim and Jo,” the class lets Jo “experience the joy of movement,” she says. And her eyes light up with a whole new expression.





## Interest Groups

### Adelante! Book Club

Meets at Arlis's Restaurant, 1525 Cornwall Ave. in Bellingham. May 22nd book is *The End of Men and the Rise of Women*, by Hanna Rosin. Newcomers are welcome. Contact: Gwen Parker 360-933-4314.

### Dames Who Dine

Contact: Lori Smiley 360-739-1379 for time and place.

### PM Book Club

The Evening Book Group meets at 6:45 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month downstairs in the Colophon Cafe in Fairhaven. The April 10 book is *Sea of Poppies* by Amitov Ghosh. We welcome all comers - please join us. Contact: Barb Craig, 360-927-2526.



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## Membership Matters.....

This is the time of year to renew memberships. Why not bring your checkbook to the May meeting? We want and need your support! Helene Berg-Kolin will e-mail or snail-mail forms to all members who have not yet paid. If you have questions or concerns, please contact her at 360-392-8856.

Also, if you know someone who might be interested in joining us, please bring them to a meeting.

### **Roy Giordano passes away**

Rosario "Roy" Giordano died April 26, as the result of a fall a few days previously. The only male belonging to Bellingham Branch, he was an avid reader and long-time workers' rights activist. He was predeceased by his wife, Jeanne. (For more about Roy, see our June 2013 newsletter.)



Proceeds will help provide scholarships to women attending Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College and Northwest Indian College.

Tickets: \$30 per person

Sample great wines from  
local vines  
and get a souvenir glass!

- \* Snack on gourmet hors d'oeuvres
- \* Listen to live music
- \* Enter raffles for custom-made gift baskets or a handmade quilt

### Not a wine fancier?

Try a sip of Mt. Baker Winery's delicious *Verjus Blanc*, the non-alcoholic pressed juice of unripened white grapes.

Questions? Liz Wright 360-671-5518

## Wine-tasting for Scholarships!

Celebrate  
the Summer Solstice  
at Mt. Baker Vineyards

Come enjoy the fun on June 21  
3 to 6 p.m.

--Just 15 minutes  
out Mt. Baker Highway



New this year:

- \* Raffle for a quilt handmade by Cheryl Jackson
- \* Browse through art and collectibles shown by our AAUW members.

Make checks payable to Bellingham AAUW.

Hand checks to your AAUW representative or mail to:

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