



Let's Celebrate the Season!

Bellingham Branch members, please gather at the **Whatcom Museum Old City Hall Rotunda Room** to view the Festival of Trees, enjoy a social time and listen to the Bellingham High School Showstoppers.

The event begins at 10 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 14, at 121 Prospect St. Please bring a holiday dessert to share. Coffee and cream will be provided. Historic City Hall will be decked out for the season. View a variety of themed, decorated holiday trees in the Rotunda Room, presented with the support of Museum Advocates. We will gather around **our AAUW tree** to hear a brief presentation from the decorating team, led by Esther Golde and her assistants, Judy Fruhbauer and Kathy Jenkis.

At 11:15, we will all need to be seated to hear the Showstoppers perform their choreographed medley entitled "Disney Dazzle" in honor of the planned BHS choir trip to Disneyland this Spring. We are told that the Showstoppers are **the** outstanding small mixed vocal ensemble at BHS. This exceptional group has won 1st place for the last 17 out of 19 years at the Regional Solo/Ensemble Contest, as well as 1st Place in the State Contest in 2015.

Other things to know:

Accessibility: To access the elevator to the second floor, go to the back of the museum and enter the basement door (via a couple steps.)

Parking: The small museum parking lot is available. Street parking is an option as it is not metered on Saturdays.

Any remaining snacks will be offered to our high school entertainers. **We'll need to be cleared out of the Rotunda Room by noon, when the museum opens to the public.**

Read about a tea, the sock drive and our handbooks on Page 2.



Branch Co-President India Nishi, right, helps Liz Wright load holiday wreaths into her car during the pick-up time for our Holiday Greenery fundraiser.

Wreath Sale success!

Committee chair Kathy Cole makes the annual sale of holiday greenery look as if it runs smooth as silk. That's because she is well organized, and has a few Branch member "elves" to help with the merchandise.

It will be a few weeks before we know the final tally on our profit, but it is definitely over \$2000.

Thanks to Kathy for her hard work, cookies and hot cider, to the "elves," and to all our wreath-sellers.



Another thing to bring to the Saturday meeting

While you are deciding on what treat to make for the holiday party at the Rotunda Room, please think about adding in some socks! In lieu of the College Pantry donation, we will be gathering new socks for the homeless. Cotton socks or other other quick-drying fabrics are preferred.

Save the Date!

Our Festival Tree at the Whatcom Museum Old City Hall advertises a tea and vintage fashion show coming up on March 21, 2020 at the Bellingham Golf and Country Club. The tea will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote. Tickets for our fundraiser are \$35, available on brownpapertickets.com. or contact Judy Fruhbauer, 360-306-3358. Only 200 tickets will be sold. Tables of eight will be offered at a discount for women's organizations and businesses.

Do you have your new handbook?

Bellingham Branch Membership Handbooks will be available at the November and December general meetings. Those that have not been claimed by then will be mailed to the appropriate members.

A big **Thank You to Esther Golde** for an excellent job in publishing these!



Linda Conroy

Local poet reads her work

"I didn't know it was going to be poetry," Linda Conroy told her AAUW audience at the November meeting, "It did surprise me."

She was talking about her first steps into writing, after she retired from a career in social work. Now, she says, she writes "all the time," and no longer puts off the fun in life until after the chores are done. Fun also includes a ukulele class.

Linda was born in Birmingham, England, and her family soon moved to Nottingham (of Robin Hood fame.) They eventually emigrated to Canada. Those early years inform many of the poems in her first book of poetry, *Ordinary Signs*, which has just been published by Village Books.

On Dec. 20, at 7 pm at the Firehouse Arts Center, Linda will be part of a reading for the "Tales of the Season" which is part of Fairhaven Winterfest.

Linda Conroy has graciously allowed Bellingham AAUW to print this poem, which she read at the November meeting.

It's Me!

by Linda Conroy

I want a yellow dress to wear today,
an orchestra to play my favorite melodies
strong angel voices singing songs
I don't remember now but liked so much before.
I want to run the way I did through
fields of buttercups, past eyes of cows.
I want to reach to the top shelf
to have the things I didn't have,
to shout at those who said I couldn't have.
I want to skip around the roundabout
to the village shops to stop to browse
and gaze at what I might have now.

I want to wander through my earlier times
to notice what I didn't then, to laugh
at what I never saw, and fathom
what I missed before.

I want to understand the girls who danced
in ballet steps, their bedrooms pink,
and boys who played with catapults and
didn't get in trouble if they did mean things.
I want to know why I was me and they
were they, and how I got here--
every step-- and every wrinkle of the road
every snag caught in the twist of thread
rolled off the spindle that is time.

I want my pink wind-up mouse back,
my building set, my fire engine
with its ladders, my old red eiderdown,
my first piano book, my crochet hook,
my best bright paints. I want to shout
and swear and make a mess, but most of all
I want that yellow dress I wore when I was five
and knew then, for the first time
I was separate from the rest.

What we think...

At the November General meeting, members began an exercise on long-term planning for Bellingham Branch. We were asked to prioritize the top three of each question. The results are below, and will form the basis for ongoing discussion of our vision for the future.

1. What do you think we should be as an organization? Please prioritize the following (and add another category if you like). There are no right or wrong answers.

- a. **A strong advocate for National AAUW priorities (Economic Security for Women, Pay Equity, Title IX, Civil Rights)**
- b. **A social organization for women**
- c. A strong force in the community - holding events such as speakers, Work Smart
- d. A fundraising organization to provide scholarships
- e. Other (please specify)

TOP VOTES: A, B (C&D TIED FOR 3RD)

2. What should our top priorities be over the next 3-5 years? Please prioritize and again there are no right or wrong answers.

- a. Growing our membership numbers with greater focus on ages 20-40.
- b. Growing our membership numbers with greater focus on ages 40-60.
- c. Retaining our membership numbers by decreasing the attrition rate.
- d. Advocating in our community and state for National AAUW priorities.
- e. **Raising more money so we can increase our outreach with scholarships and Tech Trek. Having a major fundraiser that all of membership can get behind.**
- f. Focusing more on the social aspects of the organization - more interesting meetings that aren't focused on AAUW issues; increasing interest groups, more social events
- g. **Raising our profile in the community by sponsoring things like Film Festivals**
- h. Keep things as they are.
- i. Other (please specify)

TOP VOTES: E, G

3. Over the next 3-5 years, how large would you like to see our membership become?

- a. Stay the size it is (65-75)
- b. Decrease a little (50-60)
- c. Grow a little (75-85)
- d. **Grow a little more (85-100)**
- e. Grow a lot (over 100)

TOP VOTE: D

Adelante! book group reading list still in work

The Adelante! book group has not yet finalized its calendar for 2020. So, at the combined November/December meeting, we made an *ad hoc* decision to read Gloria Steinem's new book, ***The Truth Will Set You Free, But First It Will Piss You Off!*** *There are 25 holds on 6 copies at the library, but it is a short book, and Judith and Gwen are willing to share their copies.*

Adelante! usually meets on the fourth Thursday of each month. Date for the next meeting is January 23rd..

The meeting time has been permanently set half an hour later, to 12:30 pm. We meet at Arlis's Restaurant on Cornwall Avenue. New members are always welcome. Please consider this an invitation to join us for coffee or a meal and lively discussion.

For further information please contact Marziah Kiehn, mgkiehn@icloud.com, (360) 366-8086.



Calendar

Holiday Celebration 10 a.m., Dec. 14
at Museum Rotunda Room

December Board Mtg. 2 p.m. Jan. 4
at Cordata Co-op

January Board Mtg. 2 p.m. Jan. 28.
at Cordata Co-op

(All members welcome to attend board meetings)

Welcome

Bellingham AAUW offers scholarships and supports numerous programs which help women and girls gain equity in all areas of life.



Coming in January

Amy Klosterman, a Seattle branch member who owns her own law firm, will speak on the evolution and increased awareness of Title IX since it was enacted in 1972. She will share her insights gained from over a decade of enforcing Title IX with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

December Birthday

Gwen Parker

Dec. 19

Bellingham Branch AAUW

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Welcome new members!

Jeanne Bowes of Blaine joined last summer.

Lynda Buehring of Camano Island is joining Bellingham Branch as a dual member.

New member **Annette Holcomb** is a Bellingham resident.

We hope you will find fun, friendship and purpose with Bellingham AAUW.



You provide the voice - AAUW provides the megaphone

Sign up on the national AAUW Website to become a Two-Minute Activist

Receive urgent e-mail notices to contact your members of Congress right in your inbox when your advocacy is needed most.

Now also available on your mobile device.

Bellingham Branch AAUW

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