

AAUW

Whatcom Branch



There's no mistaking the elation on the faces of Wendy Bell, Kathy Jenkis and Kay Davin as they greet each other at the Whatcom AAUW picnic June 9th. This was the first in-person gathering since the pandemic began almost 16 months ago. (Behind them, Judith Paulson and Kimberly Butts are in conversation.)

The event was held at the new Cordata Park, and included prize drawings, a catered picnic meal from L and L Bakery in Ferndale (a mother/daughter team), and installation of officers. (See Page 2 for more photos and info.).



A little breeze and bright sun was the backdrop for installation of new AAUW Whatcom officers on June 9. Retiring Co-President Robin Kagan had flowers for the incoming women, from left, *Co-President Judi Edwards, Program Vice President Uzma Ahmad, and Membership Co-Vice President Kimberly Butts.*

Not present for the ceremony were Co-President Catherine Chambers and re-elected Secretary Jean Cox-Treverton. Our returning Membership Co-Vice President Setsuko Buckley was in attendance, and provided lovely flowers, while Treasurer Judith Paulson was also present, combining pleasure and the business of collecting yearly dues from a few folks.



From left, Mialee Jose, Esther Golde and Suzanne Thorp check out the raffle items in the pavilion at Cordata Park.

Esther has taken on the job of Nametag Tracker (*I just made up that title.*) She will create name tags for new members, and try to keep us from taking our tags home with us after meetings.



Special July meeting:

Human Trafficking – Part II, at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 10, via Zoom.

Although Whatcom Branch usually doesn't meet in July, we have made an exception in this case, to complete the presentation *AAUW members Lynda Buehring and Norma Mouton* began in March. More details of human trafficking will be presented including demographics, diversity, social networking, and more action items on how we can help with this issue.

Here is some information on their non-profit **Hope Unlimited**, created as a resource for the prevention of human trafficking in our community. Here are some facts from their website,

www.hopeunl.org :

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING ENSLAVES 300,000 CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES

Unfortunately, this estimate could be low. Human trafficking and modern-day slavery is a real problem that affects our community, but very little research has been done to determine the extent of human trafficking on the state and local level. Human trafficking is a silent and invisible crime and under-reporting is very common.



Lynda Buehring



Norma Mouton

In 2018, Hope Unlimited answered the call to help bring awareness and education for the prevention of human trafficking and modern-day slavery. Today, the Anti-Human Trafficking Initiative partners with schools, first responder agencies, and community groups to help keep our kids and teens safe.

OUR VISION: TO SEE ALL CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY SAFE FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

OUR MISSION: TO PROMOTE AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND PREVENTION OF MODERN-DAY SLAVERY THROUGH TEACHING, TRAINING, AND OUTREACH

AWARENESS + EDUCATION = PREVENTION

Human trafficking occurs all along the I-5 corridor in large cities, small towns and rural areas. The cycle of trafficking can only be broken by building prevention through raising awareness and education. We must build community relationships with our youth, teachers, police, and legislators to keep our communities safe.



Education and connection is what it's all about.....

It is exciting to pass along the news that one of the speakers at our May meeting, **Jessica Sankey**, received an Outstanding Leadership Award from Bellingham School District for her work during the COVID pandemic. She is Executive Director of Operations.

Here is what the district said about her award:

"Jessica has worked tirelessly in her new role as Executive Director of Operations which began just when COVID became our new reality. As a child, Jessica dreamed of a job that would require her to multi-task — answering multiple phones while typing, drawing on a white board, helping people walking in the door. It is truly amazing the number of projects that Jessica has overseen including the Central Kitchen, the Good Food Promise, and most recently, COVID vaccinations. Even in this bigger leadership role, Jessica delivers on her core values of patience, understanding, listening and support. Known for her resolve for finding solutions, Jessica's magnetic energy and leadership is contagious. Her colleagues say that she "reinforces our confidence to perform at a high level by promoting an environment of trust, positive communication, fairness and accountability." She truly makes a difference each day to her staff. From transportation, to facilities to food services and the COVID safety team — all of these groups have done amazing work this year. We want to recognize Jessica as an outstanding leader and her incredible teams. With Jessica at the helm, anything is possible."



And this runs in the family: Jessica's daughter Gillian's group received the Volunteer of the Year Award. And of course, Jessica's mom is our AAUW member Pam Sankey.

Here is the district write-up on this award:

"An outstanding group of students from Bellingham High School used their passion for books and children to create an online platform that supports literacy, and intercultural connections. Creando Connections is the brainchild of Bellingham student Meysha Riviere, who missed reading to elementary school students, and who was soon joined by Gillian Spilker as a co-organizer. Since then, many others have joined. After creating an online reading room with books in multiple languages, the group built on their success to launch an online room with technology tutorials for students and families in multiple languages. Not stopping there, they wanted to continue their work furthering cultural understanding by showcasing dances from around the world through a partnership with the BHS dance team. These students responded to the COVID crisis with innovation, compassion and service and our community is better for it."

Also speaking at our May meeting were Jenny Lawrence, Teacher on Special Assignment and district COVID coordinator; Nyla Thursday, Health & Safety Data Specialist, and Dr. Sara Mostad, Bellingham infectious disease specialist. 🌸🌸🌸🌸🌸

Hello Dear AAUW Members)))

It was so great to see everyone who attended the June Picnic and if you weren't there, you were missed!!

This is a gentle reminder, in case you haven't had a moment yet to renew your AAUW membership...and **if you have renewed, a big THANK YOU!!**

For those of you who are life members, you just need to send dues for the Branch and State: \$21 to Judith.

It's very easy to renew online...and our Treasurer, Judith Paulson, will be very appreciative if that's possible for you.

There is no direct link to pay dues on line; but, this will get you close

[AAUW: Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

If you need help, call Judi Edwards at 360 303-0487

Otherwise, you can mail a check for \$83 payable to AAUW Whatcom, as always.

Mail to:

Judith Paulson
PO Box 29862
Bellingham WA 98228

We look forward to getting together again, **in person** at our September meeting!!

Hope to see you there, and catch up! In the meantime join us on ZOOM for Part II of Human Trafficking this Saturday.

Yours truly,

The 2021-2022 Membership Committee
Setsuko Buckley, Kimberly Butts, Robin Kagan

Happy July Birthday!

Helene Berg-Kolin	2nd
Carol Simmer	3rd
Catherine Oberg	26th



Welcome

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

See our website for details on membership:

www.aauw-wa.org

Spread some sunshine!

Do you know an AAUW member who is ailing or has suffered a loss? If so, please email our Sunshine Lady, Suzanne Thorp, who will mail a card from our branch. sthorp5@comcast.net

President's Musings

I begin as your president with some trepidation and a great deal of excitement. The Covid crisis is nearly over and we can start meeting in person again. Over the last 15 months your leadership discovered that ZOOM meetings are not all that bad and offered untapped opportunity. Your programs committee was able to draw on speakers from all over the country providing the attendees with informative and enlightening meetings. As we go forward into the 2021-2022 year we may well use ZOOM from time to time.

The new board is a good one with lots of energy. As with any organization most of the work of the group is handled in committees. If you want to get active, think about joining one. And, let's get our interest groups revitalized. Groups like The Walk and Wine Group and The Book Group; just to name two of them. Maybe start a Gardening Group so we can all lament over the management of those darn slugs and snails. Or maybe a Tech Group so we can share knowledge about our phones and various other invasive devices.

Speaking of tech, we really need a member to undertake our Facebook page; or, maybe, a Social Media Group to handle it. As much as I dislike Facebook, I must admit that it is the place people go to find people, and properly managed it can be an excellent membership tool.

So much for my ramblings. In closing, we need the support of all our members. For some of you it will be financial and for others it will be active participation. Please renew your membership. We are still in turbulent political times and will need as many of us to stay informed and engaged as possible.

Judi E.

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Bellingham Branch AAUW

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