



Giving a nod to Valentine’s Day

Barbara Streisand said it best when she said we are “people who need people.” This idea resonates with many folks, and you hardly need science to tell you how social relationships enrich your life. But did you know that we are literally wired for connection?

Our February speaker will be Christie Scollon, Associate Professor of Psychology and Honors Faculty Fellow at Western Washington University. Her talk will explore the neurophysiological underpinnings of social engagement, including some overlooked sources of connection.

She also will explain to us why she thinks Bellingham is well-designed for connectedness that can strengthen our mental and physical health and our community.

Professor Scollon has been studying topics related to Positive Psychology for over 20 years. She spent 90% of her life in flat geographical terrain, including a 10 year stint in Singapore, before moving to hilly Bellingham five years ago.

**10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 11
Mt. Baker Theatre Encore Room
Guests welcome!**



News from the Executive Board

The Whatcom Branch board met Jan. 28, and a couple items of note were addressed.

First, the yearly business meeting, which is supposed to be held in March, has been moved to April. This will accommodate the Nominating Committee’s work in finding potential new board members.

Also, the board voted to sponsor two girls to attend Tech Trek next summer. Tech Trek committee member Pam Sankey says she expects our branch will be able to send six girls, thanks to fund-raising and generous donors.

February is Black History Month
AAUW commits to fighting for justice, long-term and lasting change, and we stand in solidarity against racism. We will work to advance the policies and systemic changes identified in the New Era of Public Safety: A Guide to Fair, Safe, and Effective Community Policing platform.

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Life - and death - after Roe vs. Wade and the Dobbs decision

Linda McCarthy, CEO of Mt. Baker Planned Parenthood, spoke at the Whatcom Branch meeting in January. She gave us the facts and figures about women's health care after the Supreme Court held (in the Dobbs decision) that the US Constitution does not confer the right to an abortion.

Since that decision, 20.9 million women in the United States have lost access to reproductive health care, as numerous states have moved to ban abortions and limit birth control options.. **Here in Washington state, abortion remains legal and codified in state law.**

Recently enacted state law prohibits the state from criminalizing any pregnancy outcomes or penalizing people for assisting those who are pregnant and seeking abortions. Gov. Jay Inslee has issued an order that Washington state troopers not assist law enforcement agencies from other states in their investigation of abortion providers and patients.

Planned Parenthood saw a 5% increase in patients in Washington state from April through August, and then a 19% increase from August through October, according to Paul Dillon, vice president of public affairs for Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and North Idaho.

One of the large problems with the situation in states where abortion has been banned or severely restricted, is that doctors are afraid to assist women who are suffering miscarriages, for fear they will be accused of performing an abortion. This has already led to many cases in which women have been turned away from hospitals.

Mt. Baker Planned Parenthood has clinics in Bellingham, Mt. Vernon and Friday Harbor. They served 7,166 people in 2021. Only 5.7% of visits were for abortion services.

Among the services they offer:

Birth control	Breast and cervical cancer screening
Family planning	HIV screening and HPV vaccinations
Miscarriage management	Pregnancy testing
Wellness visits	Colposcopy

Ms. McCarthy says that the bulk of patients are in the very low income category, and that 60% of pregnancies are unintended. Their website states:

"We offer affordable health care and make every effort to accommodate everyone who seeks our help...We partner with Medicaid, offer interest free payment plans, and will bill most insurance providers."

Another concern that was noted is that in Northwest Washington counties most of the hospitals are run by PeaceHealth, a Catholic healthcare ministry, which limits options for persons in this area.



Researchers have found that under a nationwide total abortion ban, there could be a 24 percent increase in expected maternal deaths nationwide, with Black women projected to see a 39 percent increase.

Are you ready to run?

Margo Hammond is chair of this year's Nominating Committee, and welcomes questions from any members who are interested in running for a Whatcom Branch AAUW office.

At present, current Branch President Judi Edwards is planning to run for another term as President. Consider joining her team for the positions of:
Co-president
Program vice-president
Secretary

Elections will be in April. New officers will be installed in June.

Contact Margo at
margo_hammond@hotmail.com



AAUW Book Club

Please help us pick a year's worth of books!

So many books, and only eleven meetings a year! Book Club members thought it would be fun to get input from our whole Whatcom AAUW membership, on what you have read and enjoyed.

We have always been eclectic in our choices: science, historical fiction, classics, biographies — you name it. We will welcome your input! Please send your suggestions to Gwen Parker, parker.gwen@comcast.net. We will publish our final choices in the next newsletter, and maybe the list of suggestions, too.

We welcome new “bookies.” Next meeting will be at noon Thursday, Feb. 23, at Affinity Apartments main floor library. Contact Kay Davin, kaysart611@gmail.com, for entry to the building. Our February book is *These Precious Days*, a book of essays by Ann Patchett.



Happy February Birthday!

Jo Pullen	15th
Teizeen Mohamedali	21st

Welcome, New Members!

Our three newest Whatcom Branch members are **Genevieve Al-Shaffie**, **Marziah Kiehn-Sanford** and **Linda Lynn**.

Marziah is a former member, who is re-joining. Welcome, all!



The Scholarship Committee Pages

The Scholarship/College Relations Committee Needs **YOU!!**

Whatcom County is blessed with vibrant higher-education institutions: Bellingham Technical College, Northwest Indian College, Western Washington University and Whatcom Community College. AAUW-Whatcom fulfills its mission of supporting women and girls through advocacy, education and philanthropy by not only providing annual scholarships, but with support for various projects as needed. The school food banks and WCC's Girls Go Tech are some of our current and on-going projects. Each institution selects a staff person or student to work directly with one of the AAUW-S/CR committee teams.

Branch fund-raisers support the scholarships given to BTC, NWIC and WCC. The amount for these scholarships is determined annually by the Branch executive board. Currently these three institutions each receive \$1000.00. See the next page for information on our scholarships at WWU.

The Scholarship/College Relations Committee has the responsibility to develop good relations with our institutions. One or more committee members are assigned to work with an institution and to discover how AAUW-Whatcom can support them. General committee meetings are once or twice a year, but communication is done mainly through email. We work on projects as a team as needed.

Please let me know if you are interested in the committee in general, or as a liaison with a specific school.

carolsimmer@gmail.com



An update on our endowment to Western Washington University

An endowment was started by our branch for WWU in the 1990s. With annual contributions (mainly by the well-known AAUW Used Book Sale and individual contributions) by early 2000s the interest derived from the endowment balance could fund a scholarship.

As you can see, the principle took a hit from the Covid pandemic and associated market fluctuations, but still remains above the amount required for a distribution. The University generally gives out two or three scholarships each year from this fund.

WWU Financial Summary for AAUW-Whatcom Branch Endowment

	<u>07/01/20 to 06/30/21</u>	<u>07/01/21 to 06/30/22</u>
Beginning Market Val	\$87,288.87	\$106,666.97
New contributions	\$ -	\$ -
Investment Performance	\$25,061.88	(12,090.42)
	<u>07/01/20-06/30/21</u>	<u>07/01/21-06/30/22</u>
Mgt Fee	(1,967.78)	(1,959.19)
Distribution	(3,716.00)	(3,972.00)
Ending Market Value	\$106,666.97	\$88,645.36

Submitted by

Carol Simmer, Chair

Scholarship/College Relations Committee

College Pantry

We will be collecting donations for the food pantries at our four local colleges at our February meeting.

Cash is welcomed by BTC, NWIC and WCC, but Western will no longer be accepting cash because rigorous accounting regulations make it difficult to handle. Like the other schools, Western is delighted to have a variety of food and non-food items.

Suggested Food Items

Proteins such as peanut butter, canned and dried beans, quinoa, lentils, chili, and all other canned foods containing meats, fish (tuna), poultry, and dairy (cheese or milks of all kinds)

Fruits- canned and dried of all kinds; fresh firm fruits such as apples and pears

Vegetables- Canned of all kinds; also, fresh veggies such as potatoes, onions, and garlic are appreciated.

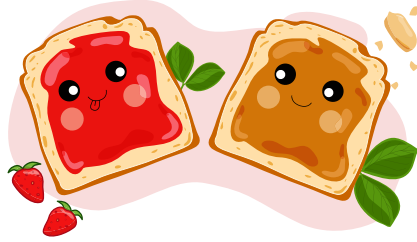
Baked goods such as breads

Pasta, Rice, Crackers

Non-food Items

Students who qualify for food coupons cannot use them to buy toiletries, therefore obtaining them at the pantry can help.

Toothpaste, tooth brushes, dental floss, soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, shaving supplies



An invitation from ALL

Whatcom Branch member Robin Kagan recently put me in touch with Michou Yenokida. Here is her note to us:

“I am on the Curriculum Committee and Board of **The Academy for Lifelong Learning**...we primarily draw seniors who are retired. They stay current and love to be challenged by learning ! Our Spring courses are now posted. I am forwarding a Highlight of the coming month's courses..I think your members may be interested, as education is their bailiwick!

“Also, if any of your members teach, I am always looking for new courses !

“Thank you for your consideration.

“*Michou*”

Check out the full information on these courses, including locations, times and costs at www.wu.edu/ALL or call (360) 650-4970

Sicily: “The Key to Everything” (Online via Zoom)

Using images of Sicilian art and landscapes, this course investigates Sicily’s 3,000-year history.

Historic Preservation and its Effect on American Society

This class focuses on how America, and particularly Washington State, has preserved its collective heritage.

The Incredible James Webb Space Telescope

Imagine observing a galaxy that was born soon after the Big Bang!

Japanese - American Incarceration: Experiencing History Through Art

We explore an artist’s vision of the treatment of Japanese Americans during WWII. This course is offered in coordination with an ALL Excursion to the exhibit in Seattle's Wing Luke Museum on March 31.

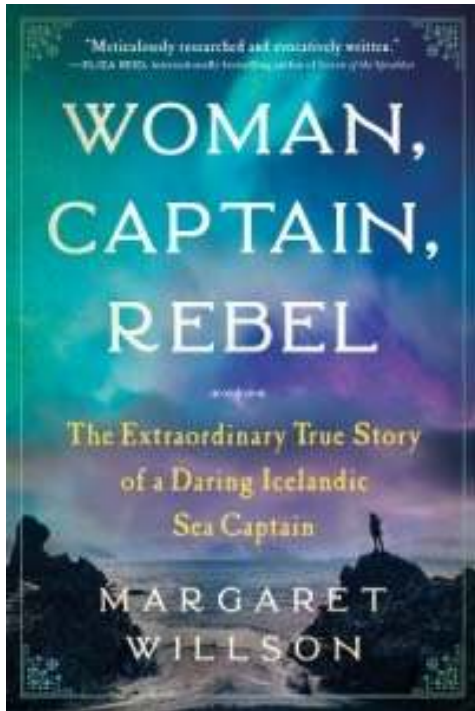
Corvidae: Jays, Magpies, Nutcrackers, Crows and Ravens

The course consists of two Zoom sessions plus an in-person field trip on Lake Padden Loop Trail.

AAUW Meet-up : Village Books:

Thu, 02/23/2023 - 7:00pm

Let us know you are attending via Meet-up!

Event address:1200 11th St
Bellingham, WA 98225-7015

Meetup link:

https://www.meetup.com/american-association-of-women-whatcom-branch/events/291385884?utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=share-btn_savedevents_share_modal&utm_source=link

Woman, Captain, Rebel:**The Extraordinary True Story of a Daring Icelandic Sea Captain**

Don't miss this presentation about a controversial woman in history who "fought for dignity and equality for underrepresented Icelanders."

Village Bookstore is still operating at a limited capacity for in-person events so it is recommended to pre-register on Eventbrite to secure your spot at the link below or on the Village Bookstore website

CLICK HERE TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT*

Woman, Captain, Rebel is an account of Iceland's most famous female sea captain, who constantly fought for women's rights and equality, and who also solved one of the country's most notorious robberies.. Anthropologist Margaret Willson would like to introduce a fearless woman of the sea: Thurídur Einarsson.

Anthropologist and writer, **Margaret Willson** has traveled extensively, in Brazil, New Guinea, Mongolia, Australia, Europe and Iceland. Her eclectic nonacademic jobs have included abalone diving and being a deckhand on fishing boats off the south coast of Tasmania. She is currently an Affiliate Associate Professor with the Departments of Anthropology and Scandinavian Studies at the University of Washington.

***Online registration closes one hour prior to the event. Spaces may be available at the door.**

Welcome to AAUW

Whatcom Branch of American Association of University Women invites you to join us.

Membership is open to college graduates and those with associate degrees from accredited schools. We offer speakers and various interest groups.

Our mission is to offer scholarships and support numerous programs to help women and girls gain equity in all areas of life.

Contact Lynda Buehring, goldracket@aol.com
or Sandy Hays, sanhaydaisy@gmail.com

Calendar of coming events

Feb. 11 General meeting at Mt. Baker Theatre Encore Room, 10 a.m.

Feb. 23 Author event at Village Books, 7 pm. Check Meetup website for more info.

Feb. 23 AAUW Book Club, noon at Affinity Apartments Library. Book is *These Precious Days*, by Ann Patchett.

Feb. 25 Exec Board meeting, 9 a.m. .via Zoom.



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

IT Specialist

Judi Edwards

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