



The crowd gathers: Whatcom AAUW’s 2023 High School Scholars begin to fill the chairs at Ferndale’s Pioneer Pavilion, along with their families and branch members.

Girls Who are Going Places hear noted scientist

by Gwen Parker, Newsletter editor

The latest news from Mars and words of wisdom on planning one’s life were themes for Dr. Melissa Rice when she spoke to Whatcom AAUW’s High School Scholars honorees for 2023.

Dr. Rice told the young women that when she first received the invitation to speak, she hesitated, because she knew she would be 7 1/2 months pregnant on the May 13 meeting date.

She decided to forge ahead, in order to deliver the message that a woman can have both a high-powered career and a fulfilling personal life. She said that when she first began her studies, there were still naysayers who cautioned that women couldn’t have it all. However, she is proof that it can be done.

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Whatcom Branch

Congratulations
to
Whatcom County High School Scholars
Recognized by their schools for excelling in
Science, Technology, Mathematics, and the Arts and Humanities

Bellingham High School

Miriam Murphy: Science
Isabelle Forster: Arts

Blaine High School

Ella Wannamaker: Science
Neely Thomas: Math
Sabrina Boczek: Technology
Ava Freeman: Arts

Ferndale High School

Evelyn Walker: Science
Shanti Thapa: Math
Eliot Varga: Math
McKenna Christie: Arts
Anikka Florindo: Arts
Catelyn Antalek: Arts

Lynden Christian High School

Tabitha DeJong: Science
Addison DeJong: Math
Alina Veltkamp: Technology
Alexandria Daniel: Arts

Lynden High School

Charlotte Martin: Science
Mya VanderYacht: Math
Alisha Sanchez: Technology
Aislinn Nilsen: Arts

Lummi Nation High School

Serenajo Pontalia: Arts
Hazel Haley: Arts

Meridian High School

Katie Prengaman: Science
Morgan Adams: Math
Annya Edin: Technology
Jayden Cabrera Herrera: Arts

Mt. Baker High School

Miabella Ablondi: Science
Natalie Marie Horsmon: Math
Tylee Nez: Technology
Tori Favro: Arts

Nooksack Valley High School

Devin Coppinger: Science
Lainey Kimball: Math
Andrea VanBoven: Tech
Esmeralda Suarez-Cruz: Arts

Options High School

Rory Carlton: Science
Zoe Norman: Arts

Sehome High School

Erin Lin: Science
Lindsey McConaughy: Math
Amina Del Castillo: Technology
Emma Esquivel: Arts

Squalicum High School

Anielen Nunez-Ramirez: Science
Eva Dethlefs: Math
Sarah Leslie: Technology
Elsa Gulleson: Arts

Scholars hear Dr. Melissa Rice

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Dr. Rice is an Associate Professor of Planetary Science at Western Washington University, where she has held a joint appointment in the Geology Department and the Physics & Astronomy Department since 2014. She received her Ph.D. from the Department of Astronomy at Cornell University in 2012, and was a NASA Astrobiology Institute Postdoctoral fellow at Caltech from 2012-2014.



Melissa Rice, Ph.D.

Her research focuses on the sedimentology, stratigraphy, and mineralogy of Mars. She was a collaborator on the Mars Exploration Rover missions, a Participating Scientist on the Mars Science Laboratory Rover mission, and a Co-Investigator for the Mastcam-Z investigation for the Perseverance Rover mission.

Dr. Rice said that all the planets in our solar system are about the same age - 4.5 billion years - but that each has its own history. The rusty red color of Mars is produced by iron oxide, indicating that at one time, Mars had water and an atmosphere, and probably looked a lot like the blue sphere of Earth.

Dr. Rice has posted on her Twitter feed: “Lives on Earth, takes pics on Mars.” And she brought for her audience a wide variety of photos that look a lot like a desert on Earth, including ones that show sedimentary evidence of how water once flowed and pooled on Mars. The Perseverance Rover evidently landed in an ancient river delta.

The fifth in a line of NASA JPL rovers, Perseverance is tasked with drilling into Martian rock, filling little tubes with the bits of rock and soil, and then dropping the tubes onto the planet’s surface for eventual retrieval and return to Earth for study. Another two missions will be needed to get the samples back to Earth.

One of the photos Dr. Rice showed her audience was less than 24 hours old, making us the first people after the science community to see it. What a treat! She also talked about Perseverance’s helicopter, named Ingenuity, which is the first helicopter to fly on another planet. Scientists had set a goal of five flights for Ingenuity to be a success, but it has flown 51 times.

Many of the High School Scholars were able to get their picture taken with Dr. Rice — a fine memento of the day!

The designated photo-taking area at Pioneer Pavilion was happy chaos as honorees had “formal” photos taken; family members took pictures or got in the picture, or groups went in search of a photo with friends or our guest speaker.



Amina Del Castillo, Sehome, and happy Mom



Annya Edin, Meridian, and Mom



Miriam Murphy, BHS, and Mom



Proud Dad and daughter Emma Esquivel



Dr. Rice with Rory Carlton, Options High

Hazel Haley with Sister and Mom





From Blaine: Ava Freeman, Ella Wannamaker, Sabrina Boczek and Neely Thomas



Lynden High: Alisha Sanchez, Aislinn Nilsen and Charlotte Martin



Speaker Dr. Melissa Rice, with Evelyn Walker, Anika Florindo, Shanti Thapa, Catelyn Antalek, and Eliot Vargas from Ferndale High



Tabitha DeJong, Alexandria Daniel and Alina Veltkamp, from Lynden Christian



Eva Dethlefs, Anielen Nunez-Ramirez and Sarah Leslie, Squaticum High



Natalie Marie Horsman, Tori Favor and Miabella Ablondi, from Mt. Baker High



Dr. Rice with Devin Coppinger, Lainey Kimball, Esmeralda Suarez-Cruz, Nooksack High

....and we get by with a little help from our friends



Clockwise from top left: Guest speaker Dr. Rice and Branch President Judi Edwards work out communications problems. Esther Golde and Kay Davin decorate. Kathy Jenkis organized everything!



**Picnic in the Park!
Tuesday, June 13th**

Fairhaven Park Pavilion, 107 Chuckanut Drive.

We will be accepting donations of money, non-perishable foods and toiletry items for our **College Food Pantry**, at the picnic.

Thank you all, for all you do!

AAUW is gathering for a free showing of

The fastest **Women** on Earth

RSVP on Meetup: <https://meetu.ps/e/M9PYQ/LSKPJ/i>

AAUW would like you to join us in attending Bellingham Technical College's (BTC) SHIFT program for a free community showing of the HBO documentary *The Fastest Woman on Earth*.

Filmed over seven years, the film chronicles the extraordinary life of professional racer and TV personality Jessi Combs. Seamlessly blending inspiration and heartbreak with joy and tragedy, this feature documentary throws viewers directly into the cockpit for Jessi's exceptional endeavor – and the price that she ultimately paid for success.

This event is open to all BTC students and the community, and includes networking opportunities and free food

Wednesday, June 7 5:30-8:00 p.m. Settlemyer Hall, Campus Center.

SHIFT empowers women, LGBTQ+, and non-binary students enrolled in trade and manufacturing programs at BTC through community outreach, student support, awareness building, and equal representation.

SHIFT is currently seeking community and industry members interested in supporting this emergent population of trainees at BTC.

If you would like more information please visit <https://www.btc.edu/AboutBTC/SHIFT.html> or contact the SHIFT Director, Rachael Wright at rwright@btc.edu.

„,and a new book!

Our member **Candace Wellman**'s new book with WSU Press was released May 18. Called *Man of Treacherous Charm*, it is about one of Washington Territory's earliest supreme and district court justices. In 1858, this local coal mine manager was appointed while under indictment for murder.

Candace has an author event scheduled at Village Books Fairhaven on June 25 and one at VB Lynden on July 1.



**Mark your calendar!
—and tell your friends!**

Don't forget, **July 15 is AAUW Day at both locations of the Community Food Co-op.**

There are **two ways to support** our organization in July —
2% Saturday: The Co-op donates 2% of total sales from this day to the selected recipient, in this case, Whatcom/Bellingham BranchTech Trek.

Donate the Difference: Round up your purchase at the register any day of July and 100% of the donation is given directly to that Community Shopping Day recipient which again will be Whatcom/Bellingham Branch Tech Trek.

Membership matters

For us AAUW old-timers, June is the month to renew our memberships. National has a new system in place to pay online, which seems to be working smoothly after a shaky startup. To use it, just go to AAUW national website, and click on the word *Membership*.

While we would like folks to renew online, if that is not possible or practical for someone, Membership Co-chair Sandy Hays has created a one page renewal form that can be filled out and sent in. Look for a link to it in an email separate from the June newsletter email.

The new national system is geared to work for renewals at any time.



		June
Barbara Craig	2nd	
Kay Davin	11th	
Marziah Kiehn	11th	
Annette Holcomb	12th	
Jan Bonzon	15th	
Ruth Norman	22nd	
Gerry Prody	24th	
Susan Moen	25th	
Nancy Simmers	30th	

Calendar of coming events

**June 13 Picnic at Fairhaven
Park Pavilion, 4:30 to 6:30,
107 Chuckanut Drive.**

June 22 AAUW Book Club,
12:30 p.m. at Affinity Apartments
Library. Book is *Underland, a Deep
Time Journey*, by Robert McFarlane,
495pp/NF
An exploration of the world beneath
our feet. *Guardian* "100 Best Books of
the 21st Century"

Date TBD Exec Board meeting
for new and old board members



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

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NEWS from the College Relations/Scholarship Committee



The Whatcom Community College President's Circle Reception on April 21st was attended by Catherine Chambers and Carol Simmer. The guest speaker, Indigenous artist James (Mexs'Kalus-Xwalactum) Harry provided insight into the creation of his artwork InnlNYAX'A7N (Thunderbird).. It sits next to the Library on Kellogg Street on WCC's campus. It is beautiful and "modern," using metal in the construction while still traditional in design.

May 13th was **High School Scholars Recognition** at the Ferndale Pioneer Pavilion! Representatives from BTC, WCC, and WWU were present to offer information to the scholars and their families. **THANKS to ALL** who attended and provided help and fantastic foods for everyone!

On May 24th, **Bellingham Technical College** celebrated their new president, **Jim Lemond**, with a reception at Settlemyer Hall. Carolyn Kinne and Carol Simmer represented AAUW-W at the event. The program included a question and answer session with President Jim, chosen out of over 500 applicants. A buffet of gourmet hors d'oeuvres prepared by the WCC culinary arts students and served by the staff were enjoyed by all — delicious!

If you are interested in participating on this committee, email carollsimmer@gmail.com. Thanks!

