

### Heads Up!

Different location for October and November meetings

The next two AAUW-Whatcom Branch meetings will be held at the main **Bellingham Public Library** location, 210 Central Avenue (across the street from City Hall.)

### Oct. 14, Downstairs meeting room Doors open at 10 a.m.

We can mingle until we can get the audio equipment and coffee set up, then start the formal meeting, probably by 10:30.

In honor of **Banned Book Week**, our speaker will be local activist and writer **Amory Peck**, asking us to Stand Up Against Book Banning, and Stand Up for Our Libraries. Our public libraries and school libraries are under attack. Amory has led the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees (1999-2008) and the WCLS Library Foundation (2012 to 2014). She is a thoughtful, eloquent advocate for libraries. Amory will discuss her dismay over the insidious attempts to limit what



materials should be on our library shelves. Amory's story about the "Feisty Little Stinkbugs" who took on the FBI helped define WCLS's proud identity as defenders of privacy and intellectual freedom.

Members whose last names start with A through L are asked to bring a tray of finger foods. Coffee will be provided by the branch.

**Our November meeting, also at the library, will be the first Saturday of the month, Nov. 4.** This change of date is due to the Veteran's Day holiday. Same circumstances will apply: Doors open at 10, and we will get started ASAP. Our speaker will be branch member **Michelle Harmeier**, president of the newly formed Bellingham Queer Collective.

Her speech will be one she recently gave to Rotary, and which was well received. 🌸🌸🌸



- What's Inside:**
- Meeting our Tech Trek campers
  - Update on affordable housing
  - What's up with High School Scholars Event



**Tech Trek Class of 2023:** From left, campers Lauren Alanis, Brenda Sanchez, Tessa Cherry, Gwenyth Brown, Sherlyn Montalvo and Leah Montano-Camacho. Talking with his current student, Leah, is speaker Will Middlebrooks, a teacher at Shuksan Middle School. Beyond him, Branch Co-President Judi Edwards and Tech Trek Counselor Judy Fruhbauer.

## Former Trekkers join this year's campers at September meeting

*by Pam Sankey, Tech Trek Committee Chair*

The September AAUW meeting is traditionally the meeting for the Tech Trek students to report about their experiences at Tech Trek STEM Camp. Since 2013 Bellingham/Whatcom AAUW has been supporting middle school students interested in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) at this AAUW camp.

Joining this year's campers were two former campers, Cassie La and Kody Hampton. They gave the audience a look at how the camp has helped them as they move through their school years.

This year's students were: Lauren Alanis, Kulshan Middle School; Sherlyn Montalvo, Gwenyth Brown and Brenda Sanchez, Fairhaven Middle School; Tessa Cherry and Lucy Trowbridge from Whatcom Middle School and Laura Camacho from Shukshan Middle School. They spoke individually of their excitement about the hands-on learning and the opportunity to experience life on a college campus. They all agreed it had been a life-altering experience for them. Their parents who also attended proudly concurred. This quote from a camper and her mother exemplifies those feelings as expressed by others.

*"The amazing opportunity that I was given at Tech Trek has taught me so much about not only what I want to pursue in life, but also how to make friends...My favorite experience of*

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## Science classes and meeting like minded girls top Tech Trek experience

*(Continued from Page 2)*

*the week was probably either dissecting a sheep's heart with my class or just hanging out with my friends at mealtime. Thank you all so much for the opportunity and I hope I can return in a few years as a counselor!*

*"As her parents, we would like to add that Tech Trek really seemed to be a life changing experience for our daughter. The camp gave her so much confidence in her own abilities and inspiration for her future. We are so grateful to AAUW for creating this opportunity for our daughter and other 7th grade girls."*

Thank you to all who have contributed to Tech Trek. Scholarship money comes from SPIE Corp in Bellingham, from our Bellingham Branch Board, and individual members. Thank you to the Bellingham CO-OP's sponsorship of Community Shopping Day and to all who shopped. This shopping community raised \$2,700 for Tech Trek scholarships to be used at Tech Trek Camp next year.

Big *thank you's* follow:

To the Tech Trek Committee: Esther Golde, Co-Chair, Jean Cox-Treverton, Judy Fruhbauer, Kathy Jenkis, Danette Keegan, Maggie Moore, your interest and support of the students keeps the program going.

To Judi and George Edwards, who loyally contribute to scholarships and participate in Tech Trek activities.

To the Bellingham Branch Board for annual scholarship support.

To the middle school teachers who select excellent candidates for Tech Trek.

Posthumously to Branch Member Kathy Cole for her enthusiasm and support for Tech Trek. 🌸🌸🌸🌸🌸



**More photo-ops: Leah, Sherlyn, Gwenyth, Brenda and Tessa let the photographer get one more shot! (Camper Lucy Trowbridge was not available for photos.)**





**Be courageous:** Trekker Lauren, along with the other campers at the September meeting, took the challenge to master using a microphone to speak about her camp experiences to the audience of AAUW members, friends and parents.



**Teacher and Tech Trek Day speaker Will Middlebrooks stands with Kody Hampton, his former student and a former Tech Trek camper.**

### Words of wisdom for everyone

- *Be Courageous*
- *Be Curious*
- *Be Kind*

This is the mantra Will Middlebrooks asks his students to use as they go through school and life. It works well for anyone.

*Will Middlebrooks*, is a charismatic 7th grade science teacher at Shuksan Middle School, a dad, an environmentalist and outdoorsman. He was an appropriate speaker for this 10th year of Bellingham Tech Trek programs, because he has been involved with Tech Trek since we began the program in Bellingham. He recommends great candidates and supports them throughout the application process.



### Many hands make light work!

**Do you have any good ideas for fund-raising?** Our projects have to be funded, and it is time for Whatcom Branch to replenish our coffers.

**We need a committee** to bring fresh ideas for fund-raisers — please volunteer to be part of this!

Contact Judi Edwards,  
[jedwards@syscongrp.com](mailto:jedwards@syscongrp.com)



## Please step up to keep the High School Scholars Event alive

We need new volunteers to help organize our High School Scholars Recognition Day in May. After many years of spearheading this, **Jean Cox-Treverton, Kathy Jenkis and Carol Simmer are stepping down. They will still be ready to answer questions!** **Judi Edwards** is leading the effort to spread out the tasks that need to be completed for a successful High School Scholars program.

### ***We need volunteers for the following posts:***

**Co-Chairperson for Schools and Scholars:** Beginning in February the County High Schools need to be contacted to solicit junior girls to be nominated in the STEM fields and in the ARTS and HUMANITIES. Once nominations are received, those nominated need to be contacted with a Letter of Introduction to the program event, and with a Consent Form that needs to be completed and returned. Information on the Consent Form can be used to generate an introduction to the scholar at the High School Scholars Awards. It is suggested that 2 co-chairpersons are needed to contact and work with the 12 county high schools.

**Co-Chairperson for Program Speaker:** Speakers in the fields noted above are those who can share their career journey with our scholars. A speaker needs to be identified and scheduled by the end of March at the latest. Any technical needs the speaker may require should be identified early if audio/visual equipment is needed at the venue where the award program will be held. The co-chairperson will be responsible for any gift/payment for the speaker as compensation and thanks for her participation in the program.

**Co-Chairperson for Gift Bags:** Responsible for collecting items and preparing gifts for the scholars; this section will occupy March and April in order to be ready for the May event.

**Co-Chairperson for Food and Beverages:** Responsible for soliciting/working with Branch members for refreshments; preparing and monitoring display of food and beverage items, and clean up after the award program. Responsibility for this section will occupy mid April until the May event.

**Co-Chairperson for Documents:** working with other co-chairpersons to prepare and print Certificates of Excellence, Name Tags and event Program. Responsibility for these items will occupy April through the May event.

**Co-Chairperson for Miscellaneous Assistance:** Responsible for helping where needed with the other Co-Chairpersons.

## An update on affordable housing

The topic of our March program was affordable housing, specifically, the squeeze being put on people who live in mobile home parks.

The number of such parks is dwindling, and there are two important scenarios. In one common situation, families own their mobile home but rent the land beneath them from the park owner. The landowner is free to raise rents, defer maintenance of the grounds, or add new fees. In another situation, becoming more common, large corporations are buying the mobile home parks and redeveloping them into more lucrative uses such as commercial space for retail businesses.

This conversation is continuing during the upcoming **Whatcom Housing Week** sponsored by Whatcom Housing Alliance.

"Preserving Manufactured Housing Communities" presentation will be on October 17th 8:30-9:30 am at the Bellingham Public Library - Central Library Lecture Room. Though free, registration is requested via EventBrite.

Here is a review of the presentation:

*In 2022, the City of Bellingham completed a several year strategic development process focused on the preservation of manufactured housing communities in support of maintaining local affordable housing. ROC Northwest has helped 23 manufactured home communities within Washington State become resident owned communities (ROC), giving those residents the opportunity to realize affordable housing security. Through this program, residents incorporate as a limited equity housing cooperative, obtaining financing, and purchase the parcel of real estate where their homes are located. This session highlights the collaboration of COB with ROC Northwest in the development of the recently adopted protective overlay zone and supporting regulations for manufactured housing parks within Bellingham.*

*This event features the following panel:*

- *Chris Behee, GISP, Long Range Planning Manager | City of Bellingham Planning & Community Development*
- *Victoria O'Banion, Marketing and Acquisitions Specialist | Northwest Cooperative Development Center*

*Preserving Manufactured Housing Communities is hosted by the Happy Valley Neighborhood Association Housing Committee as a part of [Whatcom Housing Week](#).*



*Submitted by Margo Hammond*



Happy Birthday  
to Maggie Moore!  
October 20th

## Remember our College Pantry!

If the spirit moves you, please bring non-perishable food items, toiletries or cash for our College Pantry program, to the next meeting. We alternate among our local colleges so that each month one of them receives a donation for students in need.



## Gender Pay Gap data reveals little progress

*September 12, 2023* Despite anti-discrimination laws being in place for six decades, new data reveals a troubling standstill in closing the gender pay gap.

**Women still earn just 84% of what men do**, and for specific groups of women, the situation is even more dire.

Looking closer at specific groups of women, AAUW found even more startling inequities, compared to the pay of white, non-Hispanic men:

Latina women workers are paid 52 cents for every dollar

Black women workers are paid 66 cents for every dollar

White women workers are paid 74 cents for every dollar

Asian American women workers are paid 89 cents for every dollar



## 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](mailto:sthorp5@comcast.net)

## 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](mailto:goldracket@aol.com)  
or Sandy Hays,  
[sanhaydaisy@gmail.com](mailto:sanhaydaisy@gmail.com)

## Calendar of coming events - September

**Oct. 14** General meeting at Bellingham Public Library, in honor of Banned Books Week. Doors open at 10 a.m.

**Oct. 28** Executive Board meeting, 9 a.m. via Zoom.

**Oct. 26** AAUW Book Club, 12:30 p.m. at Affinity Apartments Library. Book is *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, by Joan Didion 256pp/NF essays *Didion's first work of nonfiction, this is considered a watershed moment in American writing.*

## Thanks for your donations!

A big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the College Pantry and/or dropped a little cash in our donation jar for the general fund.

General fund donations help defray costs of renting space for meetings, paying for coffee, etc.

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