



Thursday  
December 14 4:00 – 7:00 pm  
Buffet with  
Sparkling Beverages

*Uzma's home: 4105 Wildwood Dr., Bellingham*

*(Heading S on I-5: Exit 252 for SAMISH WAY. Turn LEFT onto SOUTH SAMISH WAY. Continue STRAIGHT onto ELWOOD AVE. Turn RIGHT onto 40 ST. Turn LEFT onto WILDWOOD DR.)*

*(Heading N on I-5: Exit 252 for SOUTH SAMISH WAY. Turn RIGHT onto FIELDING AVE. Turn RIGHT onto 40<sup>th</sup> ST. Turn LEFT onto Wildwood Drive.)*

*This will be a time to celebrate the success of AAUW Whatcom Branch programs and to show gratitude for our leaders, volunteers, and the friendships we have made!*

**RSVP:** Carolyn Kinne (509) 679-6216; [crkbeach@yahoo.com](mailto:crkbeach@yahoo.com)

*Need a ride? Bringing a guest? Let Carolyn know.*

## Notes on our holiday party and events in the New Year

- If you have gloves for Robin Kagan's Glove Drive — bring them — we will have a basket.
- Please RSVP by December 10. If you need a ride, several members of the Program Committee are willing to drive. -- Please call Carolyn Kinne to have her coordinate.
- We have the next three meetings – January, February and March - booked for Mount Baker Encore Room. Meetings will be our usual second Saturday of the month.



Whatcom Branch



**Mark your calendar!**

**December**

**Dec. 7      AAUW Book Club**  
 combined Nov/Dec meeting, 12:30 p.m. at Affinity Apartments Library. Book is *Lost Apothecary*, by Sarah Penner (352pp/ Fiction )

**Dec. 14      Holiday Social** at the home of Uzma Ahmad and Sabah Randhawa, 4 to 7 p.m.

**January**

**Jan. 13      General Meeting** at Mt. Baker Theatre Encore Room, 10 a.m.

**Jan. 25      AAUW Book Club**, 12:30 p.m. at Affinity Apartments Library. Book is *The Night Watchman* - Pulitzer Prize Winning Fiction by Louise Erdrich. (434 pp)

**Jan. 22      Lobby Day online event.** Meet others from across the state and talk directly with lobbyists and office holders.

**Jan. 27      Executive Board meeting**, 9 a.m.– via Zoom

**AAUW Book Club  
 wants more readers!**

*We are still looking for more folks who like to read.*

Our December book is an engaging, fairly light read, and January —better get the book now!

It will soon be time to choose books for next year: get in on the fun with your suggestions!

See the details in the calendar on this page. Affinity Apartments are at 3930 Affinity Lane, just off Telegraph Road, across from Home Depot. Use the keypad by the front door to have Kay Davin buzz you in.

Questions? Gwen Parker, 360-224-6027



**Happy Birthday to You!**

*December*

Liz Vesely	13th
Gwen Parker	19th
Naomi Gary	20th

*January*

Judith Entwife	7th
Pat Banasky	9th
Sally Ann Zoller	10th
Mary LeDonne	19th



**Bringing groups together: From left, Michelle Harmeier, speaker from Bellingham Queer Collective; Uzma Ahmad and Judi Edwards, Whatcom Branch Co-Presidents, and Miriam Cisternas, slide show “wrangler” for Michelle.**

*November meeting —*

## **It’s okay to say “Queer” again!**

*by Gwen Parker, Newsletter editor*

You can’t know Michelle Harmeier, Ed.D., for more than five minutes without realizing that this person is a mover and shaker. Michelle is the founder of the Bellingham Queer Collective.

They retired from a career in teaching and school administration in July, 2021, and moved from California to Bellingham with their partner. In only a year and a half, they started the Bellingham Queer Collective, which “connects, celebrates, unites and advocates for the LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities” north of Seattle.

Michelle relates that use of the word “queer” was hard for her to accept, because it has been used as a pejorative for so long. But, younger people in the LGBTQ+ community want to reclaim the word, and own it. BQC has quickly grown to over 700 members.

The group sponsors a variety of events, such as movie nights, dances and interest groups. They also support local gay-owned businesses. Michelle says that in California, there are LGBTQ+ resource centers, but they found nothing like that exists in this area. To that end, BQC is working toward a brick-and-mortar community center in Bellingham.

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## BQC is new in Bellingham

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Michelle introduced her friend, Miriam Cisternas, M.A., as one of the first persons she met in Bellingham, while on a walk. They bonded over Miriam’s dog, at a time when Michelle was looking for a “retirement puppy.” A data analyst, Miriam is undoubtedly overqualified to handle a computer slide show, but she gets AAUW’s thanks!

The Collective has already acquired a 501 (C) (3) designation as a nonprofit organization. Their website is <http://bellinghamqueercollective.org>.



Miriam Cisternas snaps a photo.



Branch member Robin Lynn Kagan announced she is once again holding a drive for warm winter gloves. They can be taken to Social Fabric, downtown, or to our holiday party.



Esther Golde enjoys some of the treats provided by group members.



## 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



### 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

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## Bellingham Branch AAUW

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### Executive Board 2023-24

#### Co-Presidents

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