

**Next meeting:**

**November 4**  
**Bellingham Public Library**  
**Lecture Room**

210 Central Avenue  
(across the street from City Hall.)

**Doors open at 10 a.m.**  
**Bring some friends!**



Whatcom Branch member **Michelle Harmeier** will speak on “Bellingham Queer Collective: Supporting the LGBTQ+ and BIPOC Communities in Bellingham and Beyond.”

Michelle served as a K-8 public school educator for nearly 30 years as a teacher, principal, district level administrator, and finally the superintendent of schools in California’s Silicon Valley. Michelle retired in July 2021 and moved to Bellingham with their partner. They both love the climate, forests, bay, islands and bicycling opportunities around the region. They enjoy the downtown arts and culture scene and spend a lot of time socializing and attending performances at the Pickford, Mount Baker Theatre, and now the The New Prospect Theater.



**Michelle Harmeier**

As a new retiree in Bellingham, Michelle sought opportunities to contribute as a volunteer and is now serving on the board of Northwest Youth Services. They are also the founder and board president for the Bellingham Queer Collective (BQC), whose mission is to connect, celebrate, unite, and advocate for the LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities in Bellingham and the western region between Seattle and Canada.

Michelle will tell the story of how this new nonprofit organization, BQC, began in September of 2022, how the group grew and evolved over the past year, why these communities need targeted support, what this organization hopes to achieve in the future, and how people can become involved in participating with and/or supporting this community.

**Members whose last names begin with M through Z are asked to bring a plate of finger foods.** Coffee will be provided.





**Small world:** From left, Branch members Pam Sankey and Elsie Heinrick, with Linda Lambert and Amory Peck. Pam and Elsie are in the same book club with our October speaker, Amory, and her wife Linda.

### **“It can happen here....”**

That was the message from Amory Peck, who has led both the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees (1999-2008) and the WCLS Library Foundation (from 2012 to 2014). She spoke at the Whatcom Branch’s October meeting. Her topic was the current rash of book banning across America.

Amory acknowledged that she was “preaching to the choir” in addressing an AAUW group about the dangers of book banning. However, she stressed that the desire to remove books from library shelves often starts with just one person who is offended by a book.

She recounted an event that happened at the Deming Library in 2004, when an FBI agent came in and asked for information about persons who had checked out a book about Osama Bin Laden. Someone had reported a note written in the margin that alarmed them. The library stood up for readers’ rights to privacy — then there was a subpoena, and the WCLS attorney got involved, and eventually the FBI backed down and our constitutional right to read what we want was preserved.. (You can find the whole story online in Western Washington University records.)

*Amory’s take-away message:* Pay close attention to elections for local school boards, county councils and similar local groups.

**AAUW members  
- - out and about**

*by Gwen Parker*

- Whatcom Branch members stay busy with a lot of interests. At right is a scene from a recent event for staff and supporters at **Unbridled Spirit**, a therapeutic riding center just north of Bellingham. The center’s goal is to help people find emotional wellness through a connection with animals and nature.  
—Something I didn’t know before: Local schools contract with the farm to provide a program for some students who have experienced trauma
- My spies tell me Branch member **Robin Lynn Kagan** was a model for a fashion show at **Renee Scherrer’s store, Social Fabric**, 301 Holly Street. .Also, she has been cast in a short series of vampire plays coming up in mid November with the **Unsubdued Theatre Group!**
- And some of us **get together for lunch after an AAUW meeting**...planned or spur-of-the-moment, it’s fun! Try it!



**Gracie, the Norwegian Fjord Horse, gives a kiss to her friend Judy Fruhbauer, during a photo session with Kathy Jenkis and Esther Golde.**

**Too cute not to print:  
Executive Director Sonja Wingard shows off one of Unbridled Spirits’ miniature horses. There are also chickens and goats!**





**It's now or never:  
Please step up to keep the High School Scholars Event alive**

**Whatcom AAUW needs 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. Please contact her if you can help. Teams need to organize in January, so that contacts with local schools can start in February.

***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.

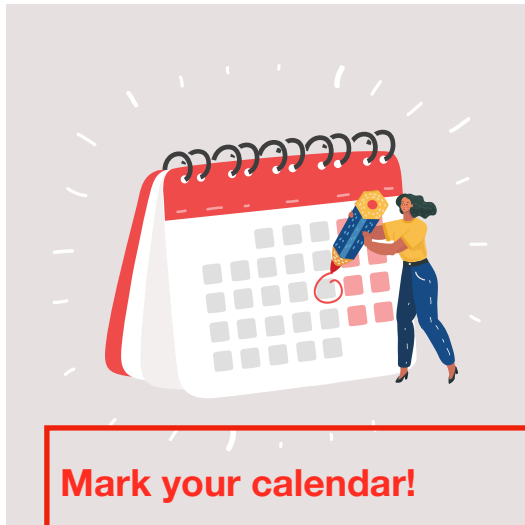
**Co-Chairperson for Program Speaker:** Speakers in the fields noted above are those who can share their career journey with our scholars. A speaker needs to be identified and scheduled by the end of March at the latest. Any technical needs the speaker may require should be identified early if audio/ 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.



**Mark your calendar!**

**November**

**Nov. 4** **General meeting** at Bellingham Public Library downstairs Lecture Room. Doors open at 10 a.m. Topic is Bellingham Queer Collective.

**Nov. 16** **Happy Hour Soiree** at SpringHill Suites by Marriott, 4040 Northwest Ave. in Bellingham.

**Nov 18** **Executive Board meeting,** 9 a.m. *via* Zoom.

**December**

**Dec. 14** **Holiday Social** at the home of Uzma Ahmad and Sabah Randhawa

**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 )

**Here’s a tip –**

Don’t forget to check out the monthly *Evergreen Leader*, the state AAUW newsletter. You are sure to find ideas for your own life or for our AAUW branch. Just Google *Evergreen leader archives*.

**Readers, Unite!**

In other words, won’t you please join our AAUW Book Club?

We are floundering for lack of three or four new members. We are open to suggestions for a change of venue, and one need not be an AAUW member to join us.

We choose our books by group consensus.

Please contact Gwen Parker if you are interested. [parker.gwen@comcast.net](mailto:parker.gwen@comcast.net)

**Also out and about—**

**Judi and George Edwards** attended the annual Whatcom Community College Foundation donor appreciation breakfast on Oct. 28. Each year, AAUW Whatcom makes a donation to the WCC scholarship fund.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!**

**NOVEMBER**

Monica Ackerman	1st
Lynda Buehring	16th

**DECEMBER**

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

## AAUW Whatcom Branch is having a Happy Hour SOIREE!

*We've done these before, and they are always fun! Bring friends!*



- Join Whatcom AAUW on Thursday, November 16th, 5:30-7:00 p.m. for **a social for members to catch up** and **for guests to learn more** about what we do and who we are!
- Appetizers and drinks will be available for purchase at the lobby Bistro.
- We will meet in the main lobby of the SpringHill Suites by Marriott Bellingham located at 4040 Northwest Ave, in Bellingham.

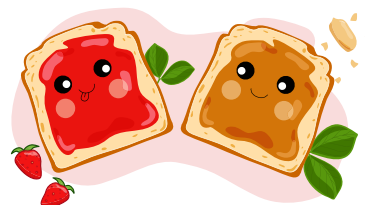
### College Pantry

At our October general meeting, we discussed our college pantry program, and members were in favor of continuing it. It was mentioned that cash is easier to handle than food donations, but both are gladly accepted.

**We have a cash donation jar and a bag or basket for food at most meetings.**

#### Suggested Non-food Items

We were reminded that students who qualify for food coupons cannot use them to buy toiletries, therefore obtaining them at the pantry can help. Needed items included toothpaste, toothbrushes, dental floss, soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, feminine hygiene products and shaving supplies.



For those who wish to bring food, these are the best choices:

**Proteins** - 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**

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

#### **IT Specialist**

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