



***Come enjoy a picnic and wine tasting at Vartanyan Estate Winery
Friday, June 13 from 12:30 to 3 p.m.***

Food: Enjoy a picnic lunch with different salads and special croissant sandwiches. And a great dessert!



Vartanyan Winery
1628 Huntley
Road
Bellingham

Drink: There will be two types of drinks provided. One is a flight (six tastes) of Vartanyan wines and the other is a flight of nonalcoholic mocktails. ***Winery owner Marguerite needs to know how many people will be wine tasting, so in your RSVP please note your choice.***

\$25 cost for the afternoon, tasting included.

Fun: There will be a beautiful *raffle basket* provided by Carolyn Kinne, plus a *book raffle basket* and *two door prizes*, so bring your checkbook or cash and help us raise enough to pay for the day and our scholarship fund.

Bring your friends and family, and **RSVP by Tuesday, June 10th**

to: Susan Moen
206-399-4909



**Livy Jones****Aubrey Briggs-Bauer****Olivia Selby**

Out sick on photo day:
Jayna Perez

**Raya Paci-Green**

Two Tech Trek alums, Lila Munson and Grace Pahl spoke about their experience at Tech Trek STEM Camp last year. They were terrific speakers and really energized the whole room. We were all ready to sign up for a week at Tech Trek Camp!

We are excited to hear our 2025 campers report about their experiences when we meet for the general Whatcom Branch meeting September 13.

Getting ready for Summer Science Camp

*By Pam Sankey
Tech Trek Committee Chairperson*

The Whatcom AAUW Branch Tech Trek Committee hosted a Meet and Greet, Saturday, May 17 at the Sunset Pond Apartments clubhouse.

The 2025 campers and their families were introduced to AAUW members and to each other. The families also learned more about the program, held each summer on the Pacific Lutheran University campus.

This year's campers are:

Fairhaven Middle School
Jayna Perez, Olivia Selby

Shuksan Middle School
*Aubrey Briggs-Bauer, Livy Jones,
Julia Strode(Alternate)*

Whatcom Middle School
Raya Paci-Green

**Lila Munson****Grace Pahl**

Out and about in Bellingham



Speaking of Tech Trek - Remember this girl?

Elena Wolgamot was one of our first Tech Trek campers and a High School Scholar award-winner. (She is also Whatcom AAUW member Susan Moen's granddaughter.)

At this year's legendary Whatcom County sporting event, the Ski to Sea race, Elena was the fastest woman kayaker. This means she won her leg of the seven-part race and is called a Top Gun. In the meantime, she is continuing to work towards her doctorate at the University of California Irvine in computer electrical engineering. This summer she will be going to Portugal for the World Championships for U 23. And then she's to go to Milan for World Championships in women's kayaking. She's juggling a lot of balls in the air while she continues to work in the UC Irvine lab.

From the time they were kids: Elena stands with another Ski to Sea Top Gun kayak racer, Jonas Ecker. Both learned kayaking with Bellingham Canoe Kayak Sprint Team, started by Dan Baharav at Lake Padden. Elena raced with the Greenlake Fitness Gals team, and Jonas with the Nelson's Market team. He is a past Olympian and Elena is in training for the 2028 Olympics in LA.



Awards of note

Two members of the WWU faculty and friends of AAUW were honored during the 2025 Celebration of Excellence Awards Ceremony on May 22, in the Performing Arts Center Concert Hall:

Receiving the Arlan Norman Award for Excellence in Student Mentoring were Dr. Melissa Rice, Geology/Physics & Astronomy (Undergraduate Mentor) and Dr. Ying Bao, Chemistry (Graduate Mentor). Dr. Rice has spoken twice at AAUW meetings involving students, and Dr. Bao is an AAUW member.

According to the Western website: “There are two categories of this award, one award will go to a Graduate Mentor and one to an Undergraduate Mentor. The financial award goes to the students of the faculty recipients, plus additional funds for supplies to support the student’s summer research.

“Dr. Arlan Norman, beloved founding Dean of the College of Sciences and Technology (now College of Science and Engineering) passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, July 31, 2021. This award was near and dear to his heart and is a fitting tribute to his legacy and is one of the most important for the College of Science and Engineering. It lives in perpetuity in Arlie’s name as a true testament to his life’s work: promoting, supporting, and celebrating excellence in research.

“The faculty awardee will select a student from their research group to receive the corresponding funds for research associated with this award based upon a demonstrated merit and outstanding promise in student research.”



Western Washington University President Sabah Randhawa, Ph.D., and his wife Uzma Ahmad (Whatcom AAUW Co-president) present awards to Dr. Melissa Rice (left photo) and Dr. Ying Bao.

At year's end...

Well, it is the end of another fiscal year for our branch. What started in our national environment with hope and optimism ended in the dismal abyss of turmoil, lies and uncertainty. **Despite the challenges posed by the current political environment, Whatcom branch was sustained by emphasizing the core mission, fostering inclusive communities, adapting advocacy strategies, and leveraging technology.**

Our membership now stands at 45, we have had outstanding programs, and we are, currently at least, fiscally sound. By remaining flexible and focused on community impact, we have continued to thrive to year's end and should do so beyond.

June is the month many of us will pay our dues for another year. With the change at the national level new members will pay dues based on their join dates. This burdens the membership chairs and treasurers with keeping up with everyone. So, help them out by paying your dues in a timely manner.

I want to thank those members who worked on the board this past year:

Co-President Uzma Ahmad, Treasurer and Public Policy chair Catherine Chambers, Secretary George Edwards, Program Chair Susan Moen (and her hardworking committee), Membership Co-Chairs Carol Simmer and Lynda Buehring, Tech Trek Chair Pam Sankey (and her hardworking committee), and Communications Chair Gwen Parker. All of these members worked to keep us educated, entertained, and informed at the local, state and national levels.

Looking forward to next year, the Whatcom branch will continue needing board members and raising money so we can continue our mission. We each need to remain vocal as citizens and to speak truth to power. We each need to separate fact from fiction; always question what is said and printed.

Always remember we are an organization dedicated to advancing gender equity through advocacy, education, and research. **Founded in 1881, AAUW works to promote access to higher education for women and girls, close the gender pay gap, support women's leadership, and eliminate barriers to equality.** Through initiatives, policy advocacy, scholarships, and community programs, AAUW continues to fight for equal opportunities and rights for all women. Fighting and winning the hard fight requires knowledge, resilience, determination, strategic planning, and mental toughness - qualities we all possess. Remember, hard fights test your character and resilience. Winning them not only achieves your immediate goal but also builds strength for future challenges. These qualities are what AAUW was built on and upon which we thrive.

Co-president Judi Edwards, CCP, MBA

May meeting...

Books and local history combine for a delightful event

by Gwen Parker, newsletter editor

Our May AAUW meeting was held in a venue new to us, but an old part of Bellingham — the Old Parish Hall of the St. Paul's Episcopal congregation. The hall stands on Walnut Street, near the juncture of Holly Street and Eldridge Avenue, and across the street from the large Gothic-style church that is the current Episcopal house of worship.

One of our three speakers at the meeting was **Linda Lawson**, who serves as historian for the old building. She told us that the Parish Hall was built in 1885 on land donated by Henry Roeder. The six ladies of the church guild organized fundraising projects to raise the \$1300 needed for construction. The first wedding at this structure was, appropriately, between Lottie Roeder (daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Roeder) and Charles Roth.

“From Idea to Book - Two Authors’ Journeys,” was the theme for our other speakers, both of whom are Whatcom AAUW members. The first, **Carolyn Kinne**, told us that she had the idea for the children’s book after she had spent a summer in the Canadian bush with her husband and their cat, Milton Ginsberg. But, a busy life as a mom and a teacher kept the project on a back burner until she retired. She decided to self-publish the book, which was updated with additional artwork in the second edition.

Our final speaker was **Candace Wellman**, the author of three books on local history, including two centering on the lives of several Native American women. She said there are three main ways to approach publishing: to self-publish, to use an agent to “shop” your book to



Linda Lawson



Candace Wellman and Carolyn Russo Kinne

different publishers, or to work through a university press. Since her books are based on exhaustive research, Candace chose the latter route. Each method has its plusses and minuses, including how much control the author has over the publishing process.

She had a fascinating story to tell about a side event that came as a result of her research. **See Page 7.**

More about an author's journey

(Continued from Page 6)

Candace told us that in talking with people from Coast Salish tribes, she learned about the Woolly dogs: a breed of white, long-haired dogs kept separate from others dogs so that they would not interbreed. The Woolly dogs, now believed to be extinct, were kept for their hair, which was woven into blankets and other textiles.

The last known Woolly dog, named Mutton, was the companion George Gibbs, a naturalist working on the Northwest Boundary Survey expedition to map the border between British Columbia and the American Pacific Northwest. The dog died in 1859.

Learning that Mutton's pelt had gone to the Smithsonian Institution, Candace assumed the pelt had fallen into dust long since. But, she decided to ask about it anyway, and lo and behold, they still had it! She travelled back to Washington, DC, to check it out, and started a renewed interest in the pelt from scientists at the Institution. It has now been thoroughly studied with modern methods, its DNA mapped, and conclusions reached that support the indigenous peoples' claim that the dogs were kept separated from other breeds, for close to 5000 years.

You can read more about it on the Smithsonian website.

Happy June Birthday!

Barbara Craig	2
Joyce Hoover	9
Kay Davin	11
Marziah Kiehn-Sanford	11
Susan Moen	25



The AAUW Book Club will meet June 26, 12:30 p.m. at Affinity Apartments Library, 3930 Affinity Lane. **Guests are welcome!**

Our book will be ***Dinners with Ruth: A Memoir on the Power of Friendships*** Paperback – 2024 Celebrated NPR correspondent Nina Totenberg delivers an extraordinary memoir of her personal successes, struggles, and life-affirming relationships, including her beautiful friendship of nearly fifty years with Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Contact: Gwen Parker, 360-224-6027, parker.gwen@comcast.net

Welcome to AAUW

How to join or renew

AAUW Whatcom Membership Renewal or joining as a new member is easily done online at <https://www.aauw.org/membership> or mail a check to:

AAUW Whatcom Treasurer
PO Box 29862
Bellingham, WA. 98228

Regular Membership: \$95.00
Other Membership:
Event Special: \$57.00
Friend of AAUW: \$10.00
College Students: \$18.81

Contact Lynda Buehring,
goldracket@aol.com
or
Carol Simmer
carollsimmer@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

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