

MINGLE AND JINGLE

at Our Holiday
Fundraising Party!

Sunday, December 3

On Sunday, December 3 starting at 5 pm
we will be celebrating our branch priorities
and the wonderful programs they support.

It's not too late to join us at the Moraga Gallery in
the Rheem Shopping Center. Remember – your
family and friends are invited too!

Click here to buy your ticket.

By attending Mingle and Jingle, you will help the
branch reach its fundraising goals for 2024.

January 16, 2024 General Meeting

Orinda Community Church
Fellowship Hall
9:30-11:30 am

DEI Grapples with the Food Insecurity Issue

The USDA defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food. Did you know: one out of six people in California qualify as food insecure and the number is even greater in Contra Costa County.

At January's general meeting, we will drill down on this topic, examine the issue within Lamorinda as well as Contra Costa County, and discuss ways that members of our branch can play a role in supporting the individuals and families within our community who contend with food insecurity.

IMPORTANT CHANGE of DATE and PLACE for OUR FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

We will be meeting at the
Serbian Church in Moraga on
February 13, 2024
(second week of the month).

Please turn to Page 6
to read more about the pro-
gram and keynote speaker.

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... WORDS from the PREZ

Things are launched that are going to be launched – phew! The Nominating Committee has been established – a sure sign that next year will happen for our branch. Activities we wanted to happen for this year have begun -the fundraiser (see below), the formation of committees, the revision of our Bylaws, the planning phases for most of what we hoped to do – all of these are in place.

I look forward to seeing many of you this Sunday, December 3 at our magnificent fundraiser (see the

article and see our website <https://oml-ca.aauw.net>, with lots more info). This is conducted on behalf of the activities that we do for the STEM workshop day (March 16 for 180 middle-school girls), for the Tech Trek awardees (residential science/math camp for a week in July), for the Burckhalter school (the school library is our turf – the pK-5 student love their time there), for the Scholarship awardees from all three local high school and from the high potential students in Saint Mary’s program, and for our local work with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Please come, enjoy the social, spend some money on great experiences and take-homes, relish the edibles, relax in the ambience created from art, music, and friends.

We’ve heard from some energizing folks. Examples include the Girls Crushing speaker in September (reassuring us that Tech Trek and STEM events deserve the attention they are getting). The speakers in October waving red flags about what happens at school board meetings brought ideas and actions. There was the message from the November meeting – we know more now about what AAUW National does and how the grants it offers with our money make a difference for the grantees. Hearing about the early lives of three of our members (Bell, Burian, and Cushman) was also a special part of that November meeting.

The Distinguished Woman committee has gotten their marching authority and are compiling letters of recommendation. Around and about our Interbranch Council, we share what we know about laudable causes and the need to act.

Here’s what I’m thankful for and proud . . . that AAUW and our branch continue to do good work to insuring movement toward increasing equity for women and girls in so many ways. On this particular Thanksgiving Day, I was thankful for the hard work done by so many of our branch members in creating the fundraiser – for us to enjoy and to fund our important work.

Around the corner, here comes the first quarter of 2024. So much to learn about (1) in January - food insufficiency – including among the residents of our own Lamorinda area and our county, (2) in February, my understanding of Artificial Intelligence will get put to rights by our real fine and knowledgeable speaker, and (3) March will bring some eye-openers from women entrepreneurs.

Get to every meeting if you can. I think you’ll be glad you came.

Gail Chesler, President

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS November 7, 2023

The branch currently has assets of \$31,849.13, and the Community Outreach Fund a balance of \$77,358.79.

Chris Laszcz-Davis gave an update on the Lamorinda Village group meeting. 20 to 25 people attended and Marie Bonilla gave an overview of AAUW.

Possible venues for the February meeting were discussed. Dr. Po Chi Wo will speak on Artificial Intelligence.

Connie Whitting reported that 19 of the bills supported by California AAUW have been passed and signed into law. She reported on Gov Trek, a program for junior and senior high school girls interested in public policy. There is a need for members willing to contact school boards with information about Gov Trek.

A budget for the fundraiser for approval by the board. Food will be catered by Genuine Goodness. An ABC license is required and will be obtained. Insurance for the event has been arranged.

The Fashion Show at Harper Greer, an enjoyable and very successful afternoon, netted \$930.00.

Scholarship applications will be online mid-November.

California State leadership is considering Stanford and Monterrey Bay as possible location for a Tech Trek Camp.

AAUW members will assist at a math festival at Burckhalter School in January.. Registration for the STEM Conference opens January 23. The Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary has donated \$15,00.

DEI will focus on attending schoolboard meetings throughout Lamorinda.

Barbara Bell, Secretary

HIGHLIGHTS from the NOVEMBER AAUW FUND GENERAL MEETING



Our November general meeting focused on the AAUW Fund and the ways in which AAUW's donations and assets provide Fellowships and Grants, fund research projects and advocacy for AAUW's mission, provide projects and services such as NCWWSL, Start Smart/Work Smart, Engage, and member services.

Last year, AAUW awarded over \$6.2 million to 285 women for post graduate Fellowships and Grants. We were fortunate to have one of the recipients of an International Scholarship as our keynote speaker

for the meeting. **Leen Arnaut** (*in photo above, with Peggy Cabaniss*) is a third year Ph.D student in the University of California Berkeley and the University of California San Francisco graduate program. She is originally from Jordan where she graduated as valedictorian of the entire country! She came to the United States after high school to attend Boston University where she earned her B.S. in biomedical engineering in 2021.

Leen talked with us about her journey to the United States, her interest in health care and the sciences due to her own health issues, and her research on pre-term labor and births under a joint program through UCSF and UC Berkeley. Her dissertation focuses on the reasons for increasing numbers of pre-term labor, whether it be from disease, genetic issues, or environmental factors. She also talked about the importance of health care for women, particularly in the first trimester, and how the lack of affordable health care impacts primarily women of color and therefore their babies.

After hearing from Leen, we heard from three of our own members on the importance and impact of scholarships in their lives. **Diane Bell, Jan Cushman and Denise Burian** (*see photo below*) shared with us their journeys in getting financial assistance that made junior college, college, and then graduate school possible. Not only were they all able to complete their educations, but they were able to graduate with less debt than many young women face today. Our meeting concluded with reaffirming the need for financial assistance for women so that they can achieve financial independence, security, and equality in the work place and in their lives.



Peggy S. Cabaniss, AAUW Fund Chair

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Our branch currently has 129 members. **Teli Thayer, Deborah Greenberg and Deborah Kimbrell** are our three new members.

Teli Thayer was our September general meeting speaker. She has a BA in Anthropology from UC San Diego and a MA in History from Boston University. She is interested in Scholarship, STEM, Public Policy and DEI. She is also interested in Bocce Ball and Hiking. She can give a hand where needed and assist in external publicity and social media.

Deborah Greenberg has a BA in Cell Biology from UC Berkeley and a PhD in Biochemistry from UC Irvine. She is interested in Public Policy, Great Decisions, Museums & Gorgeous Gardens, Evening Salon, and Hiking East Bay Regional Parks.

Deborah Kimbrell has a BA in Biology & Psychology from Mills Collage and a PhD in Genetics from UC Berkeley. She is currently Emerita geneticist at UC Davis. She is interested Tech Trek, STEM, Public Policy, Let's go to the movies, Great Decisions, Museums & Gardens, Hiking East Bay parks, international travel and Financial Savvy Women. She could help with Program planning and give a hand where needed.

Rose (Ogie) Strogatz, a member of Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek has joined our OML branch as a dual member.

Welcome to all!

Linda Bochte, VP, Membership



SCHOLARSHIP ~ FOCUS ON OUR AWARDEES and FUNDRAISING

Set an Example for Others

Each month we will profile one of our student awardees. Each young woman is actively engaged in her community and striving to learn about the problems and possibilities in our society.



**Liesel Hilkemeyer
Campolindo High School
Class of 2023**

Liesel recognized that she was passionate about STEM but also uncomfortable in class because she was the only female student. She enthusiastically participated in our branch STEM programs; Tech Trek, Girls4STEM webinar and our STEM Conference. Through these programs Liesel was able to help younger female students see themselves reflected in STEM success stories and ready to enter and enjoy STEM classes.

She says, “My work in AAUW as a High School Ambassador enabled me to stand up for myself and follow my passion in STEM. Without this external support system, the community I built around myself through AAUW programs, I may have lost my spark, my attraction to STEM fields. If I didn’t have my eye on younger generations, if I weren’t thinking about them and their future in STEM, I may not have had the courage to speak out and persevere.”

As a member of the Girl Scouts Liesel earned her Gold Award by raising awareness about juvenile type 2 diabetes by writing a book and preparing an informal website. She led a group that coordinated her book *Diabetes & Me*, a research report for parents, and a website.

“I love participating in AAUW and Girl Scouts and because of them I am stronger, more resilient, and more flexible. While I have impacted others through my community service, I have grown as a person and bettered myself.”

Mary Ann McLeod and Bonnie Fend, Co-Chairs, Scholarship Committee

Harper Greer Fashion Show

Scholarship had a fun and successful fundraiser at our **Harper Greer fashion show!** We appreciate all the AAUW members who attended as well as shopped. We made \$932.10 towards our local scholarships and Saint Mary’s High Potential Program. Enjoy some of the pictures K. de Groot took!

Carol Hепенstall (at left in photo, with Laura Wittenberg) did a great job organizing our event!



Mary Ann McLeod, co-chair of Scholarship, at left, with Valarie Burgess.



(Above) Jill Eberhard and Maryellen Judson show off some of HG outfits.

(At left) Jill Fernald makes a toast while Harper Greer owner, John Kiskaddon tickles the ivories.



GOV TREK ~ PUBLIC POLICY ~

Gov Trek is back for its second year.

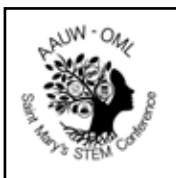
Here is an opportunity to help get more women to pursue careers in public service and elected office.

Registration is open until January 20, 2024. AAUW CA is looking to enroll 140 junior or senior high school girls. We are asked to spread the word. The program starts February 3 this year and continues for 7 consecutive two hour sessions on Saturdays from 10 am until noon. All sessions will be online via Zoom. The program is FREE.

Students will learn from speakers and panelists, including current and former legislators, staffers, and consultants. Last year’s keynote speaker was Nancy Pelosi.

This is a self enrolling program. Please advise any junior and senior high school girls you may know of this opportunity to learn and grow in leadership skills. Completion of this program will read well on college applications. Contact **Connie Whitting** for more details. cwhitting22@sbcglobal.net.

~ WELCOME to the STEM CONFERENCE 2024 ~



STEM Conference Updates: *There's Magic in the Air.*

We had 15 members attending the meeting on November 15. "15 on the 15th." I truly believe here is something magical about this conference!

One of our new ambassadors, Ela Giftigi, arrived with her mother, Sibel, and presented us with a check donated by their family business to the conference. We are thrilled to have their support.

Fourteen workshops committed, including the FBI, the human brain, bees, and one all about Pi. Thanks to K. de Groot who put us in touch with a friend of hers, Mark Hanf, who is coming out from the East Coast to do a workshop about Pi. Here's a shout-out for K!! Dr. Kristen Beck will be joining us from San Diego. We have become a global conference.

Saint Mary's College no longer requires Covid vaccinations; therefore, we will NOT need masks or require proof of vaccinations from volunteers or participants. Hooray! This year our registration will include pronouns and preferred names. Thanks to the Ambassadors, Kim Lockett, and Marta Johnson we are becoming politically correct.

The Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary has committed a donation and Chris Laszcz-Davis is reaching out to the other four rotaries. Shout out to Chris.



Stacia Cragholm, Chair, STEM Conference

We Have a Keynote Speaker!

Saint Mary's Professor of Biology, **Dr. Sonya Schuh**, will provide the Key-note talk to kick off our 2024 STEM Conference.

Dr. Schuh is a passionate teacher, scientist, artist, proud mother, athlete, environmentalist and "STEMinist." She says, "Science is critical for better understanding our world and essential for solving major problems and developing cures and new technologies. It can change lives, open minds, and inspire and unite people. With care, compassion, creativity, and good communication, scientists can truly facilitate impactful change, at a time when we need it most. And women make some of THE best scientists."

Look for a more detailed bio of Sonya in a future Triad issue.



Our next meeting is December 13, 1 pm, at Oakwood Athletic Club. Please come and join us as we prepare our brochures for distribution in January, identify improvements for the 2024 conference, and begin the volunteer registration process.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The following members have agreed to and been elected to serve as this year's nominating committee: Diane Bell, Peggy Cabaniss, Sandy Fox-Sohner, Mary Leigh Miller, and Judy Helder.

They will begin meeting soon and will be looking for members willing to serve as our branch's officers for 2024-25 as President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership, Program and Fund Chair.

These are great opportunities for leadership in our branch. There are other positions to fill and our officers do not bear the burden alone. It takes all of us to run our branch, our Community Outreach projects, and our Special Interest groups.

The Nominating Committee Members

MUSEUM & GARDENS MAVENS HIGHLIGHTS

In early November, members of the Museum Mavens interest group enjoyed a delightful tour of the **Eugene O'Neill Tao House** at its scenic hilltop location in Danville.



Inspired by their travels and love of Asia, Tao House was designed and built with distinct direction from O'Neill and his wife Carlotta. It served as a secluded retreat where O'Neill could focus on his writing. His best works, particularly his Pulitzer winning biographical novel *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, were written in his private upstairs study with its expansive views of the Diablo foothills.



His writing study, inspired by a captain's office on a sailing ship, always had two desks. His original desk (left) was donated to the museum by his son.

The annual Eugene O'Neill Festival is held each year in September, with dramatic performances showcased inside the big white barn which stood on the grounds when O'Neill purchased the property in 1937.

If you would like to be added to the Museum and Gardens Mavens group mailing list, contact Marjorie Singler or Trudy Barron. If interested in attending the Eugene O'Neill Festival in September 2024, please join the mailing list. Various members help plan museum and garden outings during the year. If you have ideas for a visit, please share your ideas with the group.

Lana Reichick, Member of Museum Mavens

BURCKHALTER

Diane Bell acted out the book *Stone Soup* with props of cabbage, carrots, barley, etc, and of course the stones and a big pot. Students wanted to know if Diane will be performing each week. We hope so!



Next month we will fill you in on the upcoming Math Festival at Burckhalter.

**Janette Maher,
Chair, Burckhalter**

**FEBRUARY 13
GENERAL MEETING**

**Generative Artificial
Intelligence
Friend or Deepfake?**

Guest speaker, Dr. Po Chi Wu, an investor in Human Capital, will explore what it is, what it isn't, its evolution to



present day technology and its opportunities and limitations. To the extent available, he will also talk about legislative activity addressing AI at present.

Specific case study situations will be discussed with some opportunity to brainstorm on how our communities, policyholders and other stakeholders can weigh in and help develop guideposts.

**Chris Laszcz-Davis,
Co-VP, Programs**

**IMPORTANT CHANGE of
DATE and PLACE for OUR
FEBRUARY MEETING**

Event: February 13, 2024
AAUW-OML General Meeting
10 to 11:30 am
Social gathering begins
at 9:30 am for coffee
and refreshments.

Location: Serbian Orthodox
Church Community Hall,
1700 School Street, Moraga



SPECIAL INTEREST ACTIVITIES

ANYONE WHO HAS READ THE BOOK

Friday, December 15 • 10 am
Orinda Bookstore
276 Village Sq., Orinda

Book: *These Precious Days*, by Ann Patchett, 320 pages, non-fiction. The book is a collection of essays (from 4 to 65 pages). Each is beautifully written and any number will appeal to an individual reader. They are personal stories written over a period of time; some happy, some sad, all wise and infused with the author's grace, wit and warmth. Contact Mary Mlynek for more information, ml_mlynek@yahoo.com.

GREAT DECISIONS

No meetings until January

Books have been ordered for Great Decisions and will arrive in January. There will be no meeting in November or December. If you would like to know more about this group, please contact Judy Helder, judyhelder@gmail.com.

HIKING EAST BAY REGIONAL PARKS

Saturday, December 9 & 23

The December 9 will be at Briones Park. Meet to carpool behind the Canyon Brewery in Moraga at 9 am or, since the hike is near Orinda, at Rite Aid Drugs at 9:15 am. This is the usual up to three mile hike/stroll – nothing daunting to scare hikers away! December 23 is an EB Ranger led hike, starting at 10 am at the Moraga Commons. Everyone should just meet there at 10 am. Contact the hike leaders for more information:

Marilyn Evans 925-376-3484
Ellen Beans 925-878-8314

BOCCE BALL

On hold until the spring

We meet for casual play at the Moraga Commons. Contact Mary Leigh Miller at mlmiller602@gmail.com to join the group.

FINANCIALLY SAVVY LADIES

Friday, January 19 • 1-3 pm
at Peggy Cabaniss's home
743 Crossbrook Drive, Moraga

We are meeting monthly to discuss various topics related to being a "Financially Savvy Women". **We will not be meeting in December but will start again on Friday, January 19, 2024 to discuss Investments.** Our first meeting in October focused on creating a net worth statement and our second meeting in November discussed how to develop a cash flow statement. Join our group if you are interested by emailing Peggy Cabaniss, pcabaniss7@gmail.com, or calling at 925-708-5178.

EVENING SALON

Thursday, December 14 • 7 pm
At Marie Bonilla's home

All members are welcome for refreshments and drinks in an open and casual environment. We bring topics to discuss - about issues of the day- social, cultural, important news stories. Contact Denise Burian at denburian@gmail.com for more information.

DEI – BLM ALLIES GROUP

Monday, December 11
Via Zoom • 3-4:15 pm

We are reading the book *Push Out* by Monique Morris. Please plan to complete the book by the January meeting for discussion. The December meeting will focus on activities needed to recruit girls for the March STEM Conference and a schedule to attend local school board meetings. Both topics help us to meet our strategic plan goals for this year to increasing diversity in our attendance and ensure diversity in education. DEI is open to all interested members. Contact Denise at denburian@gmail.com for more information.

2023-24 AAUW-OML SPONSORS/ ADVERTISERS

*AAUW members

LAFAYETTE

Asian Accents – Original Designs in Jewelry by K. de Groot*
Creative Alterations – Josef Jamkochain
DIABLO FOODS
Hollie's Homegrown
Persons Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery – Barbara Persons, MD FACS
Steve Hall, Tech Help & Consulting
The Service Outlet – Marc Harvey
Todd Bunch, Lamorinda's Handyman
Ware Designs – Fine Jewelry

MORAGA

AAAAA Rent-A-Space
E's Auto Service & Repair, Inc
Golden Palace Restaurant
National Assoc. for Advancement of Female People – Diane Bell*
Town Bakery and Cafe
ViaVienté – Lana Reichick*

ORINDA

Angie Evans Traxinger & Joan Evans*
– Village Associates Real Estate
CASA ORINDA
Meadow View Winery
Shelby's Restaurant and Catering
(Complimentary recognition)
Soraya Golesorkhi*
– Coldwell Banker Realty

WALNUT CREEK & Beyond

Bay Alarm Company
Milner's Jewelers – Countrywood Shopping Center, Pleasant Hill

Our ADVERTISERS
would love your **SUPPORT**.
Tell them you saw their ad
in our Directory!

BIKE RIDING GROUP Last Thursday of the Month

Our group bicycles on the last Thursday morning of each month. We ride on trails (not on streets). Please contact Diane Bell, dianelouise2020@yahoo.com, for information about this month's ride.

**DECEMBER 2023
AT A GLANCE**

1 FRI - CRITIC CHOICE BOOK GROUP
Pass your book along to the next person on your list.

3 SUN – MINGLE and JINGLE
5-8 pm – MORAGA ART GALLERY
OML Annual Holiday Fundraiser

7 THU – SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
1:30 pm – Home of Mary Ann McLeod

9, 23 SAT – REGIONAL PARK HIKES
9 am – Meet at Canyon Brewery parking lot.
Read more on page 7.

11 MON – DEI-BLM Allies Group
3 pm – Via Zoom
Read more on page 7.

11 MON – GOLF GROUP
Contact Jan Gee for time and venue, jgee17@yahoo.com.

12 TUE – BOARD MEETING
1 pm – Via Zoom

13 WED – STEM COMMITTEE MEETING
1 pm – Oakwood Athletic Club
Read more on page 5.

13 WED – MEMOIRS & MUSINGS
1 pm – Via Zoom
Contact Carol Messinger.

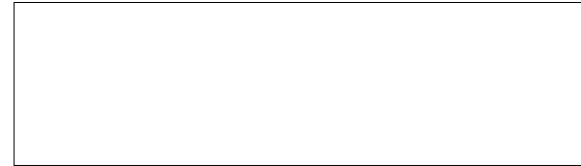
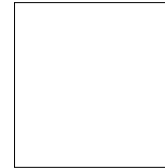
14 THUR – EVENING SALON
7 pm – Marie Bonilla’s home
Read more on page 7.

15 FRI – ANYONE WHO HAS READ THE BOOK
10 am – Orinda Books *Read more on page 7.*

24 SUN – DEADLINE for JANUARY TRIAD
Send all articles to Mary Leigh Miller, 925 360-4443
mlmiller602@gmail.com.

28 THURS – BIKE RIDING GROUP
9:30 am – Meeting place TBA
Contact Diane Bell, dianelouise2020@yahoo.com.

AAUW-OML
Database Coord.
3537 Springhill Rd.
Lafayette, CA 94549



January 2024
Look for more information in the January Triad

16 TUE – GENERAL MEETING
DEI PROGRAM
9:30 am – Orinda Community Church

9 TUE – BOARD MEETING
1 pm – Orinda Community Church

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL
SPECIAL INTEREST COORDINATORS:**
*If your group decides to meet on a different day or
time than normal, please contact our Calendar Coor-
dinator, BONNIE GALLOGLY, so she can update the
website calendar.*