

# The Grapevine

## February 2026



Let's move forward together!

What you can do:

Attend the two branch programs in February

Watch for the non-event fundraiser and make a donation to support women

---

[Program](#)

[Message from our President](#)

[Membership](#)

[AAUW Fund](#)

[Did you Know?](#)

[Girl Programs](#)

[Interest Group News](#)

[Local Scholarship](#)

[From AAUW National](#)

[From AAUW California](#)

[Board](#)

[Branch Activities and Interest Groups](#)

---

## **PROGRAM**

### **SOCIAL EVENT FOR ALL**

Save the date for a delightful evening at Cori Karlsen's home on Saturday, February 7, from 6 to 8 PM. Please bring a bottle of wine or other beverage of your choice and an appetizer to share. Enjoy chatting with others, and meet new friends, too! Spouses or guests are welcome. RSVP by Friday, February 6, to Cori at 925-640-3658 or [Cekarsen@icloud.com](mailto:Cekarsen@icloud.com).

### **LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Please join us on Wednesday, February 25, 4:30 PM, for a mission-based Branch event at the Livermore Library. We will view a screening from the "Critical Careers" podcast series, which covers real stories of women building, leading, and designing in the digital infrastructure field. Following the screening, there will be a group discussion on some of the topics raised, including how we can enhance our mission-based activities to support local women and young girls as we enter this new year as a branch. Look for an EVITE soon! This program is open to the public, so please consider bringing a friend. This program is a tie-in with the current Local Scholarship Non-Event.

### **MARCH BRANCH PROGRAM**

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, March 18, 7 PM, for a special talk by Monya Lane. Monya is a new AAUW-LPD member who will talk about Quest and her involvement in the Mobile Science Program, an endeavor that reaches 20,000 people in the Tri-Valley and San Joaquin areas.

## ***A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT***

2026 is already here, and AAUW-LPD is ready to begin a full season of policy and social programs. Watch the Grapevine, Friday Updates, and our social media for a listing and description of the events.

We will be starting soon to fill various board and committee assignments. If you are willing to consider a position, please let us know. The officer slate will be voted upon this spring. We would also like to re-establish our committee structure.

AAUW has begun offering a wide variety of topics, especially relating to public policy. These can be informative, uplifting and engaging. I encourage you to join in. Details are available from your AAUW publications.

Enjoy the coming month as the daffodils emerge and the trees flower. Just like nature, your AAUW board is looking forward to an engaging and productive spring.

***AAUW Mission: "To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy".***

Tina Amber, President  
[Tmamber6@gmail.com](mailto:Tmamber6@gmail.com)

---

## ***MEMBERSHIP***

### **MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY**

Our branch again participated, along with 40 other community organizations, in Pleasanton's Make a Difference Day. This annual Pleasanton Volunteer Festival is known as a day to "Get Connected and Stay Connected" through volunteerism and community service. The day is a great opportunity to meet new people, both potential members and youth volunteers, as well as putting our name out in the community.

With the help of Pam Leong, Sandra Bauer, Susan Wacek and Tina Amber, we spoke with many interesting people, some of whom are great potential new members.

Anita Massey  
Membership



## **AAUW FUND**

The AAUW Fund has some exciting news to share with our chapter members. We have secured a guest speaker for an in-person discussion at our spring program in April. Please mark your calendars for this special event. Hear firsthand how one AAUW fellowship is advancing one woman in healthcare research. Meet members of other branches while you enjoy your own chapter chums too. Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, here is the basic scoop. Please join us-- it will be a fascinating evening!

**WHEN:** April 16 from 6 to 9 PM. Includes a light supper (requires a small donation)

**WHERE:** Danville Congregational Church, 989 San Ramon Valley Road, Danville

**SPONSORS:** AAUW Fund representatives of the following branches:

Livermore-Pleasanton-Dublin

San Ramon

Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek

**FEATURED SPEAKER:** Kristina Lai, PhD Candidate, UC Davis, Health & Medicine/Epidemiology

**BIO:** AAUW “American Dissertation Fellowship” recipient Kristina Lai brings over a decade of experience in epidemiology and public health research. Her current work applies methods to strengthen global infectious disease surveillance. Her research informs vaccine policy and health decision-making, and she specializes in enteric (typhoid) fever.



PJ Wells

AAUW LPD Fund Chair

---

## ***DID YOU KNOW?***

There are so many upcoming opportunities for you to get involved in the LPD branch—STEM Day for Kids, Tech Trek, the Local Scholarship Foundation, monthly branch programs, interest groups and more. None of these can happen without involvement from our members, both veteran and new. Please watch for information on how to participate in all of LPD's publications and social media, especially when news from the Nominating Committee comes out!



## ***GIRL PROGRAMS***

### **STEM DAY—CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS. WE NEED YOU!**

STEM Day for 4th and 5th graders

Date: Saturday, March 14

Time: 9 AM to 2 PM

Volunteer Shifts: All day, half day, 1, 2, or 3 hour shifts are welcomed

Location: Las Positas College, Livermore

AAUW is once again partnering with Sandia National Labs for a 1-day STEM workshop for 4th and 5th graders. The students will be introduced to technical, real world concepts taught by Sandia scientists and engineers, and our very own Carol Kinnard will return with her workshop on Cybersecurity! By request and Sandia guidance, we will designate one of the three student groups for boys.

We need many volunteers to help with workshops, registration, escort participants on campus, lunch, set up, and clean up, and manage several trinket/give away tables, just to mention a few duties. If you have mobility concerns, there are many duties that you can participate in. If you can only volunteer for a few hours, that's perfectly fine too! To volunteer and to learn more, please contact Pam Leong, [p\\_c\\_leong@yahoo.com](mailto:p_c_leong@yahoo.com). We invite you to join us for an amazing day of fun!

---

## ***INTEREST GROUP NEWS***

### **WINE ENTHUSIASTS**

The group will be meeting at the Rubino Estates Winery on February 20, 12 PM. See the Evite for details.

### **BUNCO**

Bunco meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7 PM. For February 10, we will be at the home of Marilyn Duman. Please respond to Marilyn via email or phone ( [marilynduman@gmail.com](mailto:marilynduman@gmail.com) or 925-980-8046).

The March game will be held on March 10 at the home of Cori Karlsen. Please RSVP to Cori.

### **COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATION**

Is there still interest in continuing this group? Please contact Marilyn Duman if you have a suggestion for a location and what days work for you: [marilynduman@gmail.com](mailto:marilynduman@gmail.com) or 925-980-8046 .

## **LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION**

### **THE NON EVENT FUNDRAISER IS HERE!**

The annual AAUW-LPD Scholarship Foundation Non-Event fundraiser is arriving in your “snail mail” and e-mail this month. This is one of the easiest fundraisers in which you will participate. Just read the provided information to learn more about some outstanding pioneering women, select your level and send in your donation.

The women we are highlighting this year are all from the technology field, specifically digital infrastructure. All funds raised will go to granting scholarships through the Foundation to women with local connections who will be entering their junior or senior year of college. Our goal this year is to raise \$12,000. Please help us make this the best year yet! Winners will be invited to speak at our September luncheon.

New this year, we are excited to be able to accept donations via Zeffy, which means you can use your credit or debit card. Zeffy limits us to four pre-selected donation levels, but you can fill in any amount in the “other” box. Please understand that Zeffy is a free service; however, you will be prompted at checkout to add a default donation to them to help cover their internal fees. You can change this to “other” and “0” to ensure no additional charges are added to your donation. We will also accept checks mailed to the branch's PO box. All donations are tax deductible.

Also new this year, watch for a branch meeting scheduled for February 25 at the Livermore Library where we will learn more about these amazing pioneers.

Jen Kroeger and Myla Grasso  
Scholarship Fundraising Co-Chairs

### **AN UPDATE FROM A PREVIOUS WINNER**

One of last year's scholarship recipients, Ilea Thomas just sent the following update:Br

"Hi Susan,  
I wanted to wish you and the contributors at AAUW a Happy New Year! I am happy to say that I made the Dean's list with a GPA of 3.5. I've never been on the Dean's list EVER! So, I wanted to share with you how much your contribution as a recipient of the scholarship has helped me!  
Thank you all again."

Bravo, Ilea!

Susan Wacek  
Local Scholarship Chair

## ***FROM AAUW NATIONAL***

Women are underrepresented in advanced Science and Engineering degree [conferrals](#), with only 37.6% of master's degrees and 35.9% of doctoral degrees being awarded to women. But the discrepancies continue as women seek employment in STEM fields. Women only make up 26% of the STEM workforce. Even when they are employed, women who work in STEM are more likely to be the target of gender-based violence and sexism than women in other fields. Women of color face additional challenges in STEM pathways with limited diverse faculty and the double bind of racism and sexism.

STEM workers who majored in a STEM field in college typically make 1.15 times more than those who did not. Giving women equal opportunities to pursue — and thrive in — STEM careers help narrow the gender pay gap and enhance women's economic security. What's more, greater diversity also helps to banish biases, ensure a more talented STEM workforce and lead to a fuller range of the products and services that workforce produces.

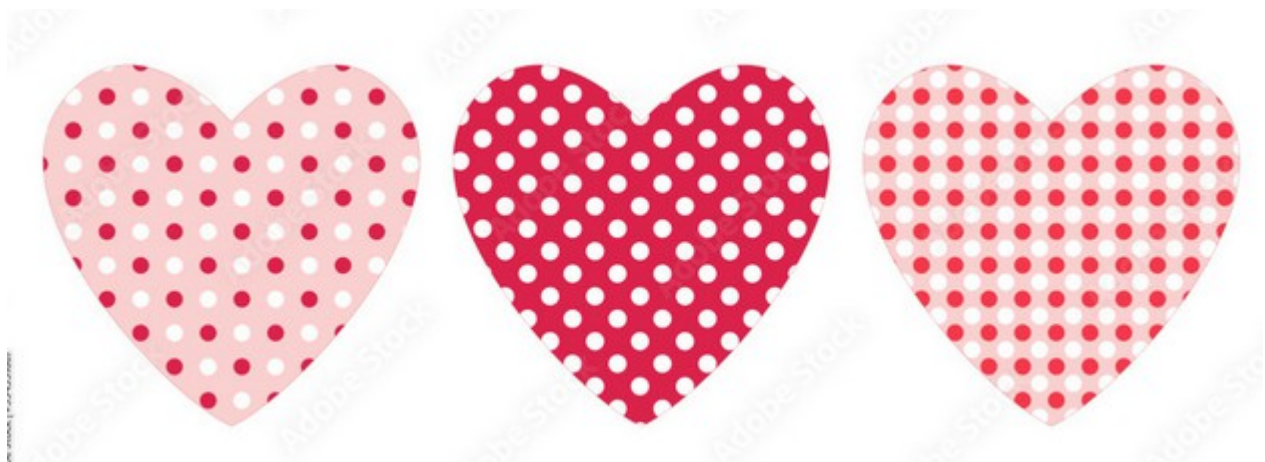
Explore more about this topic on the [AAUW National website](#).

---

## ***FROM AAUW CALIFORNIA***

There is so much to celebrate this year, including our country's 250th Anniversary and AAUW's 145th Anniversary. Unlike most of the country, AAUW is powered primarily by volunteers. Here in California, only two people receive salaries and they are both part-time, our office manager and lobbyist. Everything else happens because someone said, "I can do that or I can't right now, but I can support it."

Are you curious how nominations for the State board are going? There are six openings on our State Board for the 2026 election: 1 Board Secretary, 4 two-year Directors, and 1 one-year Director. Currently, we have 4 nominations, 2 for a two-year Director and 2 for a one-year Director. The nomination deadline is March 14th, and the election will be from April 18th to May 8th. Candidates for the 2026 election are now listed in order of receipt of their nomination forms. That is also the order they will be listed on the ballot. Click [HERE](#) for everything you need to know about the upcoming election.



## **2025/26 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President/Administrator – Tina Amber  
Finance - Myla Grasso  
Secretary- Saundra Bauer

Program Co-Chairs- Maria Kennedy, Cori Karlsen  
AAUW Fund - PJ Wells  
Membership – Anita Massey  
Public Policy - Roz Wright  
STEM Director - Sheryl Morgan  
Communications—Marilyn Duman  
Publicity—Trish Shannon

---

## **BRANCH ACTIVITIES AND INTEREST GROUPS**

### **Board Meeting**

Branch Board meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month. Everyone is welcome at board meetings, so please contact [Tina Amber](#) if you plan to attend.

### **Interest Groups**

Watch the Friday updates for updated or additional information.  
Interest groups are open to active AAUW LPD branch members only.  
Guests may attend a maximum of three times without becoming a member.

Wine Enthusiasts	Watch for info in Friday Update	February 20
International Lunch Group	Watch for info in Friday Update	
Monday Night Bridge	7 PM every Monday (except 5 <sup>th</sup> Monday or holidays)	For info and schedule, contact <a href="#">Carol Guarnaccia</a> .
Morning Book Group	9:30 AM, 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	February 23
Afternoon Book Group	1:00 PM, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	February 11
Cocktails & Conversation	Looking for ideas	Watch for info in Friday Update
Mission Discussion Group	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	February 11
Bunco	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 7 PM	February 10

Newsletter edited by Myla Grasso. Articles or photos for consideration may be submitted to [newsletter@lpd-aauw.org](mailto:newsletter@lpd-aauw.org) .