

## Art Speaks

Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Stockton Art League's Elsie May Goodwin Gallery  
1902 Pacific Ave, Stockton

At our April branch meeting we will be enlightened by "Art Speaks," a visual presentation by AAUW Program Vice President Ronda Sanders. We'll look at familiar symbols, such as the circular peace sign. We'll engage in conversation about some newer symbols that may not be so familiar with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in mind.

Next, everyone at the meeting will create a simple work of art inspired by the work of artist Susan O'Malley. If you can write a word, you can create a successful piece.

We'll share our work in small groups with the opportunity to share with the whole group. Finally, a photo of each art piece will be taken and put into a digital booklet that will be shared with all Stockton AAUW members by email and on our Facebook page.

**When:** Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> - 9:30am

**Where:** Elsie May Goodwin Gallery  
1902 Pacific Avenue, Stockton

**Cost:** \$10

**Reservation Deadline:** Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>

Call or Text Reservation Chair Betty Parsons

@ (408) 309-8958 to Make a Reservation

[bjpars\\_95120@yahoo.com](mailto:bjpars_95120@yahoo.com)

**A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID**

# President's Message



Should we open membership in AAUW to those who don't have a college degree? That is a question to be answered by members this year, with voting opening on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and extending until May 15<sup>th</sup>.

In 2021, when we first voted on this question, more than 62% of those responding voted to approve the change. However, the policy change required a 2/3 majority, so it failed. Only 25% of those eligible voted.

Where do I stand on this? In our previous vote, I honestly don't recall what I decided. Now, since I have participated in our branch's DEI group, I am much more concerned and aware about encouraging diversity, equity, and inclusion than I had been previously. I now believe that dropping the degree requirement will open AAUW to those who chose different paths to success. A college degree is not for everyone.

In AAUW's earlier history, only certain "approved" universities were acceptable for membership. Those with degrees in education or nursing were not allowed to join; neither were men. In 1997, men were allowed to join. In 2005, AAUW extended membership to those with associate degrees. We made these changes without losing our identity as an organization.

AAUW advocates for opportunities in education and individual growth for women and girls. Opening our organization to non-graduates will not change this. Our focus will be the same.

As I have said in other messages, variety enriches us; it makes us more interesting as a group. Some younger people might find our organization more attractive with the additional diversity. I believe it is time to make the change. Just think, with our current requirements, neither Eleanor Roosevelt nor Susan B. Anthony would qualify, as they did not attend college.

(Members with email addresses will receive ballots that way. Those without email access will receive a paper ballot in the mail. PLEASE VOTE!)

Sandra Mazzuola  
President



2023-2024

## Elected Board of Directors

### President

Sandra Mazzuola

### Directors at-Large

Anita Bautista

Amy Lovett-Cooper

### Program Vice President

Ronda Sanders

### Membership Vice President

Diane Oren

### Financial Vice President

Donna Hammel

### Membership Treasurer

Bette Outlaw

### Secretaries

Sue Kenmotsu

Karen Frank

### Public Policy Chair

Karen Frank

### Branch Website:

Sue Kenmotsu

[aauwstockton.org](http://aauwstockton.org)

### Delta Steamer

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### Editor

John Milford

[studio@prodgod.com](mailto:studio@prodgod.com)

(209) 952-0547





# Mentor Program

The girls in the Mentor Program and mentors met on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at the home of member Cheryl Meeker for our monthly activity. Mentor (and former Mentor Girl!) Leslie Cazares facilitated an exploration of "Dressing for Success." She led the girls in a discussion of dressing appropriately for all occasions, from a casual Saturday with friends, weddings, parties and the all-important interviews in their futures. Also discussed were skin care and age-appropriate make-up application.



Leslie commandeered her sister Andrea, who is a professional hair stylist, to shed light on hair products for all hair types. Andrea demonstrated her skill on Sarai, one of our seniors who will be going to prom soon. The transformation was awe inspiring!



After a tasty lunch, each girl went home with a swag-bag full of goodies to try on their own.



Our seniors have now heard from the colleges to which they have applied and are busy weighing all aspects to make their choices. With proms, graduations, quinceañeras and summer plans to be made, spring is an exciting time for teenagers!



KATHLEEN M. SOLARI, CPA

**IACOPI, LENZ  
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ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION

3031 West March Lane  
Suite 300-E  
Stockton, California 95219  
www.iacopi.com  
E-Mail: ksolari@iacopi.com

(209) 957-3691, Ext. 311  
FAX (209) 957-0841



## DEI: Spring Celebrations Around the World

**RIO CARNIVAL:** This celebration, held in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, is one of many festivals in the world that takes place just before Lent - a time when Christians prepare for Easter by giving up rich foods, such as meat and sweets. The Rio Carnival is one of the biggest and most spectacular festivals in the world. It lasts for several days and is a huge celebration filled with dancing, parades and music. Millions of people come to the city to enjoy the entertainment.

The highlight of Rio Carnival is the samba parade, in which samba schools compete with each other. Samba is an African-Brazilian dance style. Huge teams of musicians, artists, fashion designers, and dancers work hard all year to prepare for the festival.

**HOLI:** Holi is a Hindu festival that is celebrated in India, Nepal, and many other countries. It is sometimes known as the Festival of Colors. Holi lasts for one night and one day and celebrates spring, friendship, family, and the victory of good over evil.

On the day of Holi, there is a huge paint fight. People throw colored powders called gulal at each other and splash people with colored water from water jets and balloons. Everyone joins in, both young and old. There is dancing, singing and traditional drum music.

**EID AL-FITR:** Eid Al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, which is a holy month in the Islamic calendar. During Ramadan, Muslims are not allowed to eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. This fasting is one of the things that Muslims do to live a good life.

Eid begins at sunset. As soon as the moon is spotted in the sky, Muslims put on new clothes and pray at the mosque or at outdoor

services. Some decorate their hands with beautiful patterns using a special dye called henna.

**EASTER:** Christians celebrate Easter Sunday, the day that Jesus Christ, who they believe to be the Son of God, rose from the dead. Easter is also connected to the arrival of spring and new life. Eggs are a common symbol of Easter because they bring new life into the world. Legend has it that a friendly rabbit, known as the Easter Bunny, brings chocolate eggs and gifts to children. Traditionally, on Easter morning, children gather for an Easter Egg Hunt.

*This information came from the book "Celebrations Around the World" illustrated by Katy Halford*



**First Unitarian Universalist  
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2737 Pacific Ave. at Bristol St.  
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Contact Us: [stocktonuu.org](http://stocktonuu.org) (209)466-7743  
[contact@stocktonuu.org](mailto:contact@stocktonuu.org)

We affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person and are a welcoming congregation.

### Proposed Slate of New Officers for 2024-2025

**Sandy Mazzuola**, President

**Ronda Sanders** and **Amy Cooper**; Co  
Program Vice Presidents

**Donna Hammel**, Financial Vice President  
Donna will begin her second term

**Barbara Nash**, Director-at-Large

Members will vote for the slate of officers at the  
May branch meeting.

Officers will be installed at the June branch  
meeting





## Highlighting the Write On! Interest Group

Are you interested in documenting personal and family history? Has it been a while since you've put pen to paper? Join Write On! for our monthly meetings. Meaningful writing activities and compelling conversation will get your creative juices flowing and spur your thinking so that you can Write On!

Our group meets the fourth Friday of every month at 11am. The location varies as we meet at different members' homes. Come join our group!

Contact:  
Erica DeiRossi  
"Write On" Coordinator  
[mrs.deirossi@gmail.com](mailto:mrs.deirossi@gmail.com)  
(209) 565-5667

Here are comments from some of our group members:

*I have been with the Write On! group since its inception, about 10 years ago. Erica Dei Rossi has done an excellent job leading us with creative workshops and writing prompts. Our circle of writers is positive and fun as we share amazing work in poetry, memoirs and personal essays.*

—Jeanne Gaia

*Being a part of this group has made me go deeper into myself and I've produced some written pieces that have meaning for me and for my family. The last piece I wrote was to my six year-old grandson for his dad to read to him*

*when I am off this planet. When a person shares writing, it builds trust and friendship. I've met beautiful minds in this group.*

—Diane Oren

*At some meetings of the AAUW writing group, we share what we wrote at home and at some we write "on the spot"-- responding to a prompt by our terrific leader, Erica Dei Rossi. I always look forward to sharing my own stories, but most of all, I enjoy listening to the stories written by other members of the group.*

—Ronda Sanders

Want to start a new interest group? Do you have an interest in something that is not currently represented? If you would like to start a new interest group, please contact:

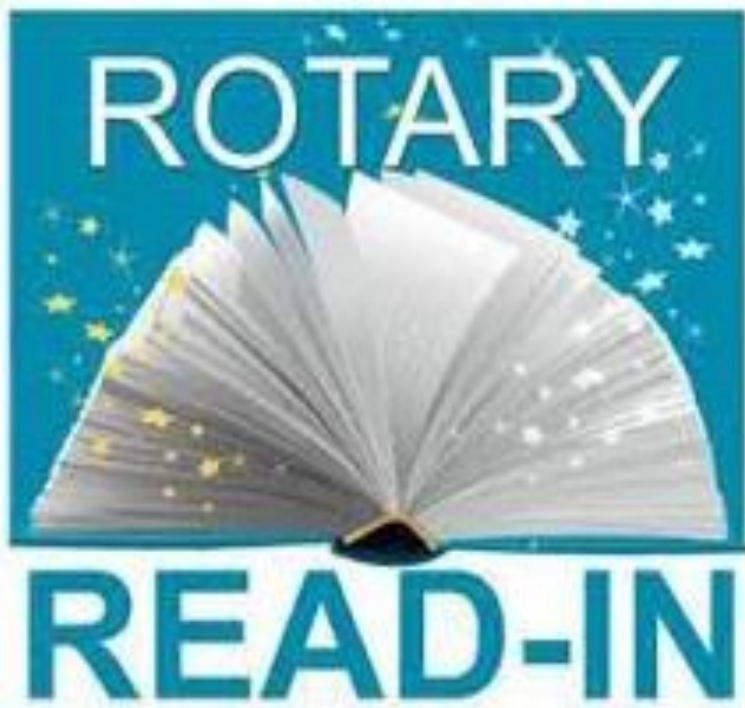
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Director at Large  
[anitabautista@comcast.net](mailto:anitabautista@comcast.net)  
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<a href="http://kempercpa.com">kempercpa.com</a>	

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER:

For all members with a membership renewal date of 6/30/24, your renewal form will be mailed the first week in May. Please return the form with appropriate dues ASAP to Bette Outlaw, 8457 Hamilton Way, Stockton, 95209. It is very time consuming to follow-up with members who have not returned dues by anniversary date.

Thank you for your consideration and for continuing your AAUW membership to assist your Stockton branch in meeting its mission.



## ***Rotary Read-In Double-Header!***

**Winter Training:** As described in the January issue of our Steamer, local Rotary Club chapters support literacy by annually sponsoring a Read-In. Volunteers from businesses, churches, and community organizations are assigned a primary classroom in Stockton, Lodi, or Manteca schools. In January/February, each reader purchases a book, practices reading it to be in shape to share it with their particular class, and knows that they will present it to the students and teacher after it's read. Over 60 schools have participated in each recent year. One of them is Kennedy Elementary in North Stockton.

**The 2024 Double Header:** Usually all Read-In "games" have the same starting time. This year it was to be 10am on Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>. At the Kennedy "stadium," six AAUW sisters and one brother read to their respective—and appreciative—TK-2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes, gifted each with its special book, and enjoyed post-game...er... *post-Read-In* talk and treats in the teacher's lounge. However, the two 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade Special Day Autistic classes and two 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes were NOT on the Kennedy grounds, but on a previously scheduled Ag-Venture field trip. Team AAUW Coordinator Cindy Milford scheduled a Game 2 Read-In event on March 14<sup>th</sup> for those four classes. See pictures for details.

**Most Valuable Player:** And the award goes to ALL our AAUW readers! Thank you for being on time, enthusiastic, and well-prepared. As can be said every year, our volunteers supported literacy, enriched classroom libraries, and modeled a love of reading to scores of youngsters. They played to win—the hearts and minds of children. They are truly in a league of their own.



***February 29<sup>th</sup> Game 1 Read-In Team: Rosa Solis, Amy Lovett-Cooper, Pam Mallett-Jones, Joan Erreca, Betty Parsons, Karen Frank, and Kendall Parsons***

*Remarkably, ALL in this group were at least second season readers—not a rookie in the bunch! They were confident and showed good sportsmanship when faced with schedule snags. After being photo-snapped, some stayed to share the morning's experiences and sample goodies provided by the administration.*



***March 14<sup>th</sup> Game 2 Read-In Team: Sue Kenmotsu, Jan Vernor-Howard, Erica DeiRossi, and Sarah Howard.***



*This was a determined, adaptable group. They'd stepped up to the plate and volunteered to participate in the small pop-up Game 2 Read-In and contended with limited on-the-street parking due to that day's big Awards Assembly with many parent attendees. They stayed for an hour of post-game casual interaction: the photo-op, treat-sampling, and, most significantly, conversation that left everyone feeling like a true team of AAUW Sisters.*



**Jan** added music to her story presentation. She had already shared a book on February 29<sup>th</sup> with her church team but two weeks later joined Team AAUW for Game 2



**Sarah** read the autobiography of local astronaut Jose Hernandez after driving from her Modesto home during rush hour to check in at Kennedy by 9am!

**-Reported by Team AAUW Coordinator  
Cindy Milford-**



Reading Is  
Fundamental

## Reading Is Fundamental Update

Last spring, the Steamer article “Where the RIF Books Are” answered the following:

→How does AAUW—Stockton manage the national literacy program Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) for our community? Branch members fund book purchases via individual donations and our Community Outreach budget. Members called AAUW/RIF Liaisons order books for their respective K-6 schools and, assisted by Branch volunteers, distribute the books at one or two events a year.

→Where in each RIF school do the students actually examine and select their new free books? A school's distribution area might be an empty classroom or the school library or the multi-purpose room, places where hundreds of inviting books could be displayed for children to handle and examine. Each youngster would then choose a free book to take home, read to/with older family members, and share with siblings.

Each month for the rest of school year 2023-24, the Steamer will feature a book distribution at one or two of our four local RIF sites. April's site is South Stockton's Lottie Grunsky Elementary School.



The bright, spacious setting for a RIF distribution is the multi-purpose room at Grunsky. On March 15<sup>th</sup>, AAUW/RIF Liaison Pam Mallett-Jones, with help from 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the custodian, and an AAUW volunteer (see photo), prepared for and managed visits from 428 K-6 students. She has established a very efficient system for book selecting! Students' happy faces prove that books still excite them!



*These third graders face the challenge of picking ONE book from the scores of choices. Pam replenishes the array of titles.*



*AAUW/RIF Liaison for Grunsky Elementary Pam Mallett-Jones and a Grunsky third grader check out her book choice.*



*AAUW volunteer Tom Jones shares the joy of a Grunsky fourth grader who found the perfect book.*



*Students excitedly show off their free RIF books.*



## **Proposed AAUW Membership Change**

The following information includes responses by AAUW CA to questions that have been asked re: the proposed By-Law change to eliminate the degree requirement for AAUW membership.

### **1. Does this change devalue our support for higher education?**

NO, we can change and keep strongly rooted in our commitment to higher education as a path to success, as well as our support for Fellowships and Grants. This change allows those who have taken parallel educational paths to join our work for gender equity.

### **2. Won't we have to change our name?**

NO, we'll still be AAUW, a national organization that works for gender equity. We have brand recognition and in fact, the name has not been representative of our organization for a long time.

The AAUW acronym is now well recognized and we are known by the work we do, not by the words in our name.

### **3. Why is the degree requirement a barrier?**

The 143 year-old requirement is no longer serving us the way we need.

You do not need a degree to believe in or advocate for our mission. We firmly believe that removing the degree requirement is in the best interests of AAUW and its future relevance and sustainability as an inclusive and forward thinking organization committed to advancing equity for women and girls. Many of the members we hope to attract, younger members in particular, are not interested in joining an organization that they see as exclusive.

According to the 2021 Census, only 34% of all Americans had earned an AA or BA. That means we are missing a lot of voices at the table and a lot of passion and talent.

Furthermore, this change will allow AAUW and branches to qualify for grants from corporations and foundations that value diversity, inclusion, and equity that we are not qualifying for today.

### **4. Isn't this just an effort to get more members?**

NO, eliminating the degree requirement alone is not likely to substantially increase membership. Changing requirements in 1987/2005 did not have a major impact. However, the degree requirement is counterproductive to recruiting diverse and younger members.

### **5. What is required for the amendment to pass?**

An amendment to the bylaws requires 5% of eligible members to vote and a two-thirds majority of voters to pass.

### **6. Has AAUW made changes like this in the past?**

YES, the organization has evolved to meet challenging times with several bylaws changes since 1921.

- 1949 - Voted to allow any woman holding a degree from an approved institution be entitled to membership in both National and branches, effectively prohibiting discrimination at the branch level.
- 1963 - Voted to allow women with degrees from any accredited institution be approved for membership and eased the degree requirement to allow Home Economics, Education and Nursing.
- 1975 - Voted to drop exclusive list of approved institutions and opened membership to any woman with a degree from an accredited institution.
- 1987 - Voted to allow men to join AAUW.
- 2005 - Voted to allow individuals with an associate or equivalent degree to join.
- 2009 - Voted to change AAUW's purpose to "promoting equity for women and girls."

Hopefully these responses will aid you in making your decision whether or not to support the by-law change.

Voting will open April 3<sup>rd</sup> - Your e-mail will come from "Simply Voting." Check spam if you don't see it. Those members without an e-mail address will receive a paper ballot by mail.

AAUW Stockton Branch, Inc.  
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**Vision:** AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measureable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

**Mission:** **AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.**

**Value Promise:** By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

## *April Calendar*

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location/Contact
Mon	15	6:00pm	April Board Meeting	Online via Zoom
Wed	17	All Day	Reservation Deadline	Betty Parsons - (408) 309-8958
Sat	20	9:30am	AAUW April Program: Art Speaks	Elsie May Goodwin Gallery