



Stanwood-Camano Branch of AAUW

In Touch

Empowering potential in women and girls through education, research, advocacy, and philanthropy.

February 2026

Founded April 16, 1936 - Celebrating 90 years

Edited by Martha Huyler and Georgi Proulx



www.aauwsc.org

February 5th

Thursday, 1:00 p.m.

February Board Meeting

SCAF Building

February 12th

Thursday, 12:30 p.m.

Social Half Hour

Program: 1:00 p.m.

General Meeting

Arrowhead Ranch Tour

615 Arrowhead Road, Camano

February 17th

Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.

JAVA BREAK

Cookie Mill

For Coffee and Conversation



President's Message

Lael Williams

Our AAUW branch celebrates young women pertaining their educational dreams. Thank you to all the members who participate in the branch programs to achieve this goal. This is a busy time of year for AAUW members involved with STEM Scholars, Tech Trek and Scholarships as they search for suitable candidates to be celebrated via spring programs. Meanwhile, the PWP team is preparing for our major event to find the funding for these initiatives.

At the state and national levels, AAUW has their focus on legislation pursuant of education and equity for women. Please read the newsletter and then consider participating in any or all levels of AAUW. Our actions matter!

February 12: Arrowhead Ranch Tour

Linda Demetre

AAUW will be visiting Arrowhead Ranch, Thursday, February 12, at 12:30 p.m. for Social Half Hour followed at 1:00 p.m. with a presentation about the classes, concerts, and other activities, including their famous soap box derby that they host. When we tour the property we will also see the greenhouse and flower garden. This organization gives back to our community and sponsors kids through education and support.

The address is 615 Arrowhead Road. Please join us and bring a friend; we love to meet newcomers.

If you can bring savory or sweet treats for the 12:30 Social Half Hour please contact Anne Milton, Hospitality Chair.



Membership Corner

Lynda Buehring, Joyce Leak

We are delighted to welcome Wendy McKane to AAUW. Wendy brings with her a wealth of experience as a world traveler and a gourmet cook. She is known for her creativity and organizational skills, and she is highly dedicated, having served as a committed board member with other organizations in our community. We look forward to the positive energy and expertise Wendy will contribute to our group.

Branch Power: AAUW members recently made a significant impact on our community by donating more than 215 packages of baby wipes to the Stanwood Camano Food Bank. This thoughtful contribution was especially meaningful, as the food bank expressed deep appreciation for receiving such a much-needed item. The donation directly supports families in our area and highlights the ongoing commitment of AAUW members to serve those in need.

In addition to their generous donations, many AAUW members are actively involved as volunteers at the Stanwood Camano Food Bank. Their dedication extends beyond providing essential items; through their volunteer work, these members help the food bank deliver critical services and resources directly to families in our area. This hands-on involvement demonstrates the multifaceted commitment of AAUW members to supporting and strengthening our community in meaningful ways.

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Future Events

March 5th

Thursday, 1:00 p.m.

March Board Meeting
SCAF Building

March 12th

Thursday, 1:00 p.m.

General Meeting
Debbie Dimitri/Annie Oakley
Utsalady Ladies Aid Building

March 18th

Wednesday, 10:00 a.m.

JAVA BREAK
Cookie Mill

*For Coffee and Conversation
Bring a Prospective Member*



What's going on at AAUW-WA?

<https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/activities-information/calendar/>

Visit our branch website:
www.aauwsc.org

Public Policy

Go to:

AAUW Washington to keep up with happenings in the current legislative session and to learn about areas for action.

www.aauw-wa.org

AAUW Action Network for Congressional items regarding the national issues for action.

<http://capwiz.com/aauw/home/>

Public Policy - Advocacy Day, January 26

Joanne Drewsen

Advocacy Day was on Monday, January 26, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. It was open to all AAUW members. Resources to add to your understanding of AI and how it is affecting our world, if we do not have parameters and guidelines about how it should be used- how it will affect our world and children in school.

Emily Bender, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Washington, spoke and said that AI is not a coherent set of technologies, and there is much misunderstanding of what it can and cannot do. Her book is meant for anyone trying to understand more about AI - [The AI Con: How to Fight Big Tech's Hype and Create the Future we want.](#)

Emily also recommended a book by Virginia Eubanks -[Automating Inequality-How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor.](#)

We also heard from Jai Jaisimha, founder of the Transparency Coalition on AI in our state and nationally. They are creating partners from diverse places to work with legislatures to create legislation with appropriate protections around AI. They are in the process of creating a Parents Playbook – an AI Guide to Chatbots. Their website can be found here:

<https://www.transparencycoalition.ai>

In addition, Nancy Sapiro, our lobbyist, gave an excellent summary of what we are dealing with this legislative session: a short session, a budget shortfall, needing to pass a supplemental budget. There is much to do and whoever is interested in weighing in on the AAUW priorities, again, please let me know.

Be sure to read each week's legislative update which can be found under Public Policy at the State website; <https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/>. There are talking points for the AAUW priority bills to help with talking with legislators and their staff, as well as sample letters to legislators. There is also a way to see how legislators voted in 2025 and how they vote in 2026.

There are three important bills on AI that our state policy team is supporting that definitely affect our members. It would be great if members could call, voicemail and ask for support of these bills to pass. Most have bi partisan support.

Healthcare and AI — the rapid uptake of unregulated AI tools by insurance companies is alarming. Both **SB5395** and **HB1566** address making improvements to transparency and accountability in the prior authorization determination process. Care cannot be denied based on an evaluation by AI. Only a licensed physician can or should sign off. Algorithms can process but humans are required on the final sign off. They say it is being used in private and public insurance companies but not Medicare. In our state, it is being used on Medicare requests.

Algorithms discriminate against women. **HB2157** regulates high risk artificial intelligence system development, deployment and use. IF the system doesn't call out gender discrimination, it will move forward and work against women.

Companion chatbots are unsafe. The **HB2225** and **SB5984** call for regulating high risk artificial intelligence companion chatbots. This bill will especially protect minors and teens. Some chatbots have increased the risk of suicide and self-harm. This chatbots bill also calls to limit the role of AI in psychotherapy with regular updates telling the user: You are not speaking with a human being.

See page 3 for the Advocacy Bills for 2026 and the links for more information.



Advocacy Day Bills 2026

Joanne Drewsen

Below are the priority bills chosen for 2026.

We are supporting 7 priority bills on Advocacy Day. These bills have been through our bill review process.

[What are Priority bills, support bills, watch and learn bills.docx - Google Docs](#)

#1. Algorithms discriminate against women.

HB 2157 (Ryu) Regulating high-risk artificial intelligence system development, deployment, and use. **[HB 2157 Washington State Legislature](#)**

#2. Companion chatbots are unsafe.

HB 2225 (Callan) Concerning regulation of artificial intelligence companion chatbots. **[HB 2225 Washington State Legislature](#)**

#3. Healthcare and AI – The rapid uptake of unregulated AI tools by insurance companies is alarming.

SB 5395 (Orwall) Making improvements to transparency and accountability in the prior authorization determination process. **[SB 5395 Washington State Legislature](#)**

#4. Medication abortion access on campus – only 1 out of 61 WA state public postsecondary institutions offer medication abortion.

SB 5826 (multiple sponsors) - Concerning access at public postsecondary educational institutions to medication abortion. **[SB 5826 Washington State Legislature](#)**

#5. Protect pregnant workers personal information.

SB 6014 (Nobles) Concerning pregnancy-related accommodations. Adds section to protect privacy of pregnant workers health information. **[SB 6014 Washington State Legislature](#)**

#6. Domestic workers have no workplace protections - we can fix that.

SB 6053/ HB 2355 (Saldaña/Thomas) Establishing labor protections for domestic workers. **[SB 6053 Washington State Legislature](#)** **[HB 2355 Washington State Legislature](#)**

#7. Prevention and remedies require business complicate in human trafficking to be held accountable for human trafficking

SB 5936 (Orwall) Concerning prevention of and remedies for human trafficking. **[SB 5936 Washington State Legislature](#)**

Your 2025-2026 Board

President

Lael Williams

President-Elect

Deb Narcisso

VP of Finance

Nancy Russell

VP of Finance-Elect

(open)

Co-VP of Membership

Lynda Buehring, Joyce Leak

Secretary

Karen Walden

VP of Program

Mary Pilkington

Assistants: Linda Demetre,
Mary Raymond*

Public Policy

Joanne Drewsen

Communications

Georgi Proulx, Martha Huyler

* Appointed position, shares
vote with VP

Activity Leaders

Purses with Purpose 2026

Georgi Proulx, Mary Raymond

High School STEM Scholars

Linda Demetre, Lael Williams

Scholarship Chair

Karen Rogers

Tech Trek Chair

Mary Chesney

AAUW Funds Coordinator

Jackie DeFazio

Candidate & Issues Forum

(open)

Historian

Helen Smith

Diversity

Katie Farrey

Stanwood-Camano Give

Mary Raymond, Georgi Proulx

Sunshine

Anne Milton

Newsletter Team

Georgi Proulx, Martha Huyler



DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility) Spotlight

Katie Farrey

This year we are focusing on mental health with definitions and resources from NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness).

Eating Disorders can take over a person's life when preoccupation with eating and weight make it harder to focus on other aspects. Rates are higher among women and the disorder usually appears in adolescence and young adulthood. It can cause serious physical and emotional problems and can be fatal.

People with *anorexia nervosa* deny themselves food and obsess about weight loss. They deny hunger, binge eat and purge and exercise exhaustively as they try to limit, eliminate and burn calories. They may be irritable, socially withdrawn, lack emotion and fear being fat. They become very thin and the body slows down metabolism to conserve energy, causing loss of menstruation, constipation, abdominal pain, irregular heart rhythms, trouble sleeping, low blood pressure and dehydration.

People with *bulimia nervosa* will eat large amounts of food in a short time period, then force vomiting, abuse laxatives or excessively exercise. This repeating cycle causes feelings of being out of control, guilty and shameful, low self esteem linked to body image and withdrawing from family and friends. Binging and purging damages the digestive system, harms teeth and causes acid reflux and dehydration, which can lead to cardiac arrhythmias, heart failure and even death.

People with *binge eating disorder (BED)* eat large amounts of food in a short period of time even if they are not hungry or are uncomfortably full. They feel embarrassed, guilty, disgusted and depressed. They do not purge or exercise excessively and may be normal weight, overweight or obese.

The current theory is that eating disorders are caused by attempts to cope with overwhelming feelings and painful emotions by controlling food. Factors may include genetics, cultural pressures, peer pressure and emotional health. Risk factors include age, gender, family history, dieting, changes and vocations and activities. Early diagnosis is best and treatments include psychotherapy, medicine and nutritional counseling and weight restoration monitoring.

<https://www.nami.org/types-of-conditions/eating-disorders/>

Upcoming Opportunities:

Black History Month - 100th Year Anniversary

Feb. 24th 11:00 a.m., Sno-Isle Library Online

The Smithsonian's Incredible History with Smithsonian Curator Emeritus Tom Crouch - Online Author Talk

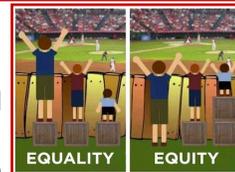
<https://sno-isle.bibliocommons.com/events/695ed4381f01fb76cec50de0>

Tech Trek Nominations

Mary Chesney

Invitations to submit nominees were sent out to all the local school districts in the first week of January. As of the time this note was written we have received three nominations. Teachers have until January 30 to submit names. We continue to hope the Arlington Middle schools and Lakewood Middle school will submit nominations.

If you know any STEM teachers at any of these schools, please tell them about Tech Trek or have them contact me.



Special Branch Activities

Day Trippers

An informal gathering of members with time and interest to participate in a variety of outings.

Lynda Buehring, Linda Lynn

Movie Group

Meet for a movie at our local Stanwood Cinema. Watch for an email invitation. Suggestions are encouraged.

Anne Milton, Georgi Proulx

JAVA Break is held monthly alternating between the third Tuesday and third Wednesday 10:00 a.m. at the Cookie Mill. Please save the date, bring a friend!

Our gatherings are a special time with friends to share memories and thoughts we usually don't have time to share at general meetings. Let's share a mug and great conversation... you never know where it's going to take us...!

Nancy Voelckers, Georgi Proulx

Book Group

Open to all members. Join us for lively conversation if you've read the book or if you just want to come join the discussion.

Katie Farrey
Marianne McGarry-Bloom



[www.facebook.com/
stanwoodcamanoaauw](http://www.facebook.com/stanwoodcamanoaauw)



Book Group

Katie Farrey, Marianne McGarry-Bloom

All members are invited to join the Book Group whether you have read the book or just want to join the conversation. Please contact Katie Farrey if you want to be added to the email list.



Monday February 2, 2:00 p.m. at the Home of Judy Trammell

The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pip Williams

"Esme is born into a world of words. Motherless and irrepressibly curious, she spends her childhood in the Scriptorium, an Oxford garden shed in which her father and a team of dedicated lexicographers are collecting words for the very first Oxford English Dictionary. Young Esme's place is beneath the sorting table, unseen and unheard. One day a slip of paper containing the word *bondmaid* flutters beneath the table. She rescues the slip and, learning that the word means "slave girl," begins to collect other words that have been discarded or neglected by the dictionary men."

Monday March 1, 2:00 p.m. at the Home of Darlene Hofbauer

My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor

"An instant American icon--the first Hispanic on the U.S. Supreme Court--tells the story of her life before becoming a judge in an inspiring, surprisingly personal memoir. With startling candor and intimacy, Sonia Sotomayor recounts her life from a Bronx housing project to the federal bench, a progress that is testament to her extraordinary determination and the power of believing in oneself. She writes of her precarious childhood and the refuge she took with her passionately spirited paternal grandmother. She describes her resolve as a young girl to become a lawyer, and how she made this dream become reality: valedictorian of her high school class, summa cum laude at Princeton, Yale Law, prosecutor in the Manhattan D.A.'s office, private practice, federal district judge before the age of forty. She writes about her deeply valued mentors, about her failed marriage, about her cherished family of friends. Through her still-astonished eyes, America's infinite possibilities are envisioned anew in this book"

Monday April 6, 2:00 p.m. at the Home of Martha Huyler

My Friends by Frederik Backman

"#1 New York Times bestselling author Fredrik Backman, who "captures the messy essence of being human" (The Washington Post), returns with an unforgettably funny, deeply moving tale of four teenagers whose friendship creates a bond so powerful that it changes a stranger's life twenty-five years later"

For more information, contact Katie Farrey or Marianne McGarry-Bloom.



Send a Little Sunshine

Anne Milton

Our branch has a Sunshine Committee to send good cheer and well wishes to members when needed. If you would like a card, phone call or email sent to one of our members, kindly reach out via email to Anne Milton, and we will honor your request.

Check It Out!

How many ways can you find to get involved in our AAUW branch? From committees to outings to fellowship to presenting something new....take the opportunity to find something interesting.

Contact the person who submitted the article you will read using the roster of current members to discover how to participate or ask questions about something that interests you.



Day Trippers Are Busy Bees!

Lynda Buehring, Linda Lynn, Joyce Leak

On Tuesday, January 20, Kathy Cunningham, Lynda Buehring, Joyce Leak, and Linda Lynn traveled together to Mount Vernon in one car for a delightful evening out. Parking was conveniently located just half a block from our three destinations, all within easy walking distance. The evening began at Forte, an exquisite chocolate shop with international accolades, followed by dinner at the nearby Thai House, where the meal was both delicious and efficiently served. From there, we stepped next door to the historic Lincoln Theater for a screening of *The Natural* (1984), starring a youthful Robert Redford alongside Glenn Close, Robert Duvall, Barbara Hershey, Kim Basinger, and a cast of familiar character actors. Long regarded as one of Redford's finest performances, the film proved uplifting—a thoroughly enjoyable escape for us all!



Our next adventure is Friday, February 20. Please join us for dinner and comedy night for Dinner and Comedy Night.

We begin with Dinner at Pacioni's Pizzeria in Mount Vernon with a delicious meal at Pacioni's Italian Restaurant and Lounge, located in the heart of downtown at 606 S 1st St. The restaurant opens at 5:00 p.m. and offers an inviting atmosphere perfect for family dinners, quick lunches, or convenient takeout. Pacioni's is renowned for its real ingredients, fresh flavors, and commitment to making every visit enjoyable and worthwhile. Whether you're dining in, picking up food, or opting for delivery, Pacioni's is ready to serve you with classic Italian cuisine and exceptional pizza.

Following dinner, we head to the Lincoln Theatre for Italian Comedy Night, starting at 7:30 p.m. Cozy Comedy presents the finals of the annual comedy competition: Washington's Funniest Mammal! After beginning with fifty of Washington's top comedians, the competition has narrowed down to four finalists. Audience members will play a crucial role in selecting the winner of the \$2,500 grand prize by judging and voting during the event.

The finalists are seasoned comedians with appearances on major networks like FOX, Comedy Central, and HBO, as well as credits in comedy specials and victories in other competitions such as the Seattle International Comedy Competition. These performers have entertained audiences in clubs and festivals nationwide. The evening will be hosted by Cozy Comedy's own Travis Sherer.

Advance reserved seating tickets are available for \$30 per seat, plus applicable fees. Member discounts do not apply to this Cozy Comedy production. Please note that all ticket prices include a \$2.00 Preservation Fee, which supports the ongoing preservation of the Lincoln Theatre and its programs. You may also purchase tickets at the Lincoln Theatre Box Office that night.

Transportation and Additional Details For those interested in carpooling, meet at Terry's Corner Park and Ride at 4:00 p.m. and behind Stanwood Police Station at 4:15 p.m. Feel free to bring a friend and enjoy a memorable night filled with laughter, entertainment, and camaraderie.

Your Membership and Day Tripper Teams hope to see you there!

Program Schedule for 2026



March 12	Debbie Dimitre presents "Annie Oakley and Calamity Jane" <i>Utsalady Ladies Aid Building</i>
April 9	Washington Poet Laureate <i>(location to be determined)</i>
May 14	High School STEM Scholar Recognition and Tech Trek Campers <i>Stanwood United Methodist Church</i>
June 28	Scholarship Tea/Annual Meeting <i>Camano City Schoolhouse</i>

Purses with Purpose April 25, 2026—Down the Backstretch!

Mary Raymond, Georgi Proulx

Thank you to all of you who have made the effort to purchase and donate purses or have spread the word to friends and family to collect new and gently used purses. It has helped us greatly in working towards our goal.

The PWP Purse Processing team held its final purse procurement on January 28 and is happy to report we have collected enough purses for successful live and silent auctions. The team has registered a total of 229 purses which include 28 that qualify for the live auction. Jackie DeFazio and Karen Walden will fill out the live auction with a combination of purses purchased with donated funds and with selection(s) from the 30+ purses handcrafted and generously donated by Karen Walden. And, of course, we are always open to any unexpected last-minute find. We thank you for your hard work acquiring and donating these lovely purses.



Mary Pilkington began her solicitation of businesses for certificates in January and did quite well. If you solicit any items please coordinate with Mary Pilkington and Georgi Proulx so we don't approach businesses twice. Pass along any certificates to Georgi for recording and storage.

Carolyn Spector and Mary Raymond have submitted grant applications with our local Tulalip and Stillaguamish tribes; now we wait for their response.

Ticket sales (\$50 each) will begin for branch members the middle of February. Watch for more information.

Your Steering Committee is comprised of:

Procurement Team: Jackie DeFazio, Karen Walden, Joanne Drewsen, Jill Johnstone

Auxiliary Procurement Coordinator: Mary Pilkington

Live Auction Organizer: Karen Walden

Silent Auction Set Up: Bev Maxwell

Fulfillment/Bagging Team: Jill Johnstone, Linda Lynn

Catering Coordinator and Centerpieces: Linda Demetre

Luncheon Table Set Up: Gay Campbell

Wine and Champagne: Helen Smith

Raffles: Lynda Buehring

Tickets/Tables: Mary Chesney

Business Sponsors: Martha Huyler

Grants: Carolyn Spector

A girl can
never have
too many
purses

This is a TEAM effort; it takes ALL of us to make this successful! Put Friday, April 24, on your calendar for helping set up in the afternoon at Camano Center; time to be announced.

Volunteer Coordination Team will solicit volunteers from our members, the schools, and other organizations to help us set up on Friday afternoon, serve the meal, manage silent auction sold purses, and help us return the space to original condition after the event. Mary and Georgi could use some help in coordinating the volunteers.

TEAM WORK will make our event the best and most FUN ever. Join in and help today.

This branch has proven it can work as a team....keep it up! You do not need to do it by yourself nor will you have to.

Contact Mary Raymond or Georgi Proulx with any questions.



Scholarship Season Opens February 1

Our 2026 Scholarship application period begins February 1. Application packets are due April 30, 2026.

All students, female and male, who meet the following requirements are encouraged to apply.

- ◆ You must be a current resident of the Arlington, Stanwood, Camano Island, Lakewood, or La Conner area OR be a graduate of Lakewood, Arlington, Stanwood, Lincoln Hill, or La Conner High Schools.
- ◆ You must have completed at least 2 years of study at an accredited college or university by June 2026 and have verifiable plans to continue upper-division or master's level post-graduate work at an accredited 4-year college or university in the fall of 2026.
- ◆ You must submit all items listed below for consideration.
- ◆ All submissions must be postmarked on or before Thursday, April 30, 2026.

Applications and required documentation are available at www.aauwsc.org/scholarship.

Meet Our Member

Yonah Ben Levy

Born in Connecticut, sadly Yonah's mother, Judith Ann Hart, died of cancer nine months later in Seattle at her parents home on Magnolia Bluff. "I stayed with her parents, Joseph and Eve Hart, for almost two years when my Dad, Jack Ballard, came to get me after he married again! We moved around Seattle after the War until we settled in Laurelhurst and stayed put for four years. During this time three more children were born so I had lots of changes in my formative years! Finally we left the city for Mercer Island which was a suburban dream with particularly good schools and gave us a good start in life."



Her first college was Whitman in Walla Walla where both her parents had attended. "I met my husband there while at U of W for a summer program and married my first husband. My senior year I finished up at George Washington University in the summer of 1966 with a BA in Art. After a few years of teaching and having three children I got a Masters of Art for Teachers at the University of Washington! Finally I attended Seattle University for a Pastoral Leadership degree in my late sixties. There was a four year Education for Ministry Degree I also received from Swanee college while I began attending St. Aidan's on Camano Island before I added my Seattle U degree."

Yonah's occupations were as an artist and art teacher. Her hobbies are "skiing, dancing, sewing, singing, gardening! I left for Israel in 1981 and have been a dual citizen ever since. This resulted in lots of travel and so did doing the art business!"

What would surprise us about you?

"My husband Chaim Bezael was the photographer at my second wedding, in Jerusalem. The groom left me after two months, and Chaim asked me to marry him 9 months after that wedding. We have been together 36 years together pooling our talents and after a long stretch of climbing the new immigrant ladder in Israel could return to the States and work at restoring our lives together with our six children and eleven grandchildren plus one great granddaughter! Finally, after 9/11 we were able to purchase Stanwood House and have prospered in our goals as artists and family affairs and attachments, by the grace and mercy of God!"

Yonah joined our AAUW branch "because they are a great group of women helping others and educating ourselves plus seeing to promote educational opportunities for the youth around us!"

Meet Our Member

Wanda Hill

Wanda grew up in the Yakima Valley and went to Wapato Schools. "My parents had a Black Angus Ranch and I showed cattle and sheep through 4-H. I loved doing this every year. Life on the farm was very peaceful, and the farmers took care of each other. We had fire burn down our haystack when I was in 7th grade and my dad was very concerned about how he could feed the cattle during the winter months. A farmer down the road told my dad to come and take whatever he needed from his haystack and just pay him back the next year."



"Girls were not seen in the same way as boys. We had to wear dresses or skirts to classes and were not given any other options. When I was showing cattle at the fairs, the FFA boys got excused absences, but I was told mine would not be excused. My mom 'came to bat,' and she wrote a rather terse letter explaining that I was doing the same thing they were. (Girls were not allowed in FFA, either) The "powers" revised their decision, and my absences were excused as well."

She went to Central Washington State College and graduated from there with a degree in music education, allowing her to teach K-12, band, orchestra, or choir. "I graduated at a time when there were few jobs. Luckily, through my student teaching mentor I got a job in Shoreline. I later received a Master's in Education from City University."

Wanda first taught Junior High choir in Shoreline and later moved to Shorewood HS after the new school opened. Then took 10 years off to have babies. She worked in a preschool that her kids went to and then got a part time job in Bellevue, again teaching choir in the middle school. "After two years, I moved to Everett, teaching music to elementary kids. That was pure joy."

She received a state grant to teach music using technology and her interest in tech grew. "I decided it was again time for a change and I moved to the tech lab, teaching elementary kids. After school I held tech classes for credit and I taught administrators and teachers."

Wanda's hobbies and interests: "I recently started watercolor. This year I painted all my Christmas cards. Right now, it is like my elementary kids work but I love it. It is so relaxing. I love to cook and bake and try new recipes. Thrifting and antiques are among my interests as well. Since we built the new house, we have not traveled a lot, but while our daughter was with her husband in Germany, we took a trip to visit them. We visited Paris and would love to explore more in Europe."

What would surprise us about you? "My face has been on billboards and buses around Seattle, Yakima and the Tri Cities. My voice has been on radio once speaking about technology and again singing when I was 12. I have written articles for national and state magazines and been quoted in an Australian author's book all about tech. I have taught tech using Microsoft tools around the US and in the Virgin Islands."

Wanda joined AAUW because "we have had a summer place on Camano for years and we decided to retire here. After we moved I needed to be around like-minded people working for a purpose. Gay Campbell brought me to AAUW. I love the power of these ladies working to shape government for women in the work place."

Celebrating the Holidays at Il Granaio

Photographer—Martha Huyler

Our 2025 Holiday Luncheon was wonderful at Il Granaio Authentic Italian Restaurant in Mount Vernon. Originally planned for December, we had to postpone until January 8 due to the flooding in Mount Vernon. Big “thank you” to Lynda Buehring and Joyce Leak for the great games and prizes. Below are photos from the celebration.



Marianne McGarry-Bloom
Nancy Politte (guest)



Joyce Leak, Lynda Buehring



Katie Farrey, Nancy Voelckers



Kathy Cunningham, Helen Smith



Nancy Russell, Lael Williams



Mary Raymond, Linda Lynn
Joanne Drewsen



Martha Huyler, Georgi Proulx
Karen Rogers



Deb Narcisso, Jackie-Lyn Olson



Linda Demetre, Cathy Massimino

Continued on page 9

Celebrating the Holidays at Il Granaio (continued from page 8)
Photographer—Martha Huyler



Elaine Richards, Anne Milton



Gay Campbell, Robin Hanks



Jennifer Engleman, Jackie DeFazio



Game Time



Cork Snowman and Rudolph

General Meeting Minutes - January 15, 2026

Program: SCSO Superintendent Ryan Ovenell and Evan Caldwell discussed the upcoming school levy followed by Deb Narcisso presenting her program on women and financial literacy. Meeting was held at SCAF.

VP President Elect Deb Narcisso gave a presentation about eliminating the gender gap in financial literacy. Deb consults for Western Washington University's Merriman Financial Literacy Program.

Call to Order: President-elect, Deb Narcisso, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes – The November 13, 2025 meeting minutes were approved by majority vote, as published in the December 2025 newsletter. The motion to approve was made by Georgi Proulx and seconded by Kathy Cunningham.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Nancy Russell shared the balances of the accounts as of December 31, 2025. Scholarship Account: \$10,043.36, Operating Account: \$5,230.25 and Scholarship Money Market Account: \$35,198.36. Approval of the Treasurer's Report was voted on and approved.

VP Programs – Mary Raymond announced the agenda for future monthly programs. In February we will meet at Arrowhead Ranch. Debbie Dimitre will present Annie Oakley and Calamity Jane in March. In April there will be a presentation by the Washington Poet Laureate. High School STEM Scholar and Tech Trek Campers Recognition will take place in May. Our Scholarship Tea and Annual Meeting will be held in June.

Membership – Lynda Buehring introduced and welcomed new member Wendy McKane. She also mentioned that the holiday lunch went well and that over 200 packages of baby wipes were collected.

Day Trippers – Lynda Buehring provided details about the planned trip to watch the Robert Redford film, *The Natural*, which will be screened at the Lincoln Theater in Mt. Vernon. Carpools leave Terry's Corner at 4:00 and at Stanwood Library at 4:15 on Tuesday, January 20th. Let Lynda know if you plan to attend. She is also thinking about going to a Comedy Night in February.

Hospitality – Anne Milton thanked those people who brought snacks for the meeting.

Public Policy – Deb Narcisso reminded everyone about the upcoming Advocacy Day on January 26th from 9:30 -12:00. Joanne Drewsen would like to know if you sign up for this. The keynote speaker will be Emily Bender. The focus of the event will be Artificial Intelligence. Contact Joanne if you'd like to join Zoom calls with state legislators to advocate for priority bills.

Purses With Purpose – Georgi Proulx announced that the Purse Procurement Team will meet one more time on January 28th. Ticket sales for the auction are scheduled to begin in early February. Tickets cost \$50 each or \$400 for a table of 8. Membership will be given priority for reservations. She said that she still needs a team of volunteers for set-up and take-down duties. More volunteers will be needed for the Silent Auction and clean-up. Carolyn Spector wrote grants with the Tulalip and Stillaguamish tribes. Mary Pilkington oversees the auxiliary item procurement. It was suggested by Kathy Cunningham that we budget to pay for a crew to move the furniture for the auction.

Scholarships – Maryanne McGarry-Bloom shared that she and Karen Rogers are working together to create an online scholarship application.

Old/New Business – Cheryl Allen shared her experience in working for the charity group, "Days for Girls". The group makes and distributes menstrual kits for girls. Recently, Cheryl went to each elementary school in the Stanwood/ Camano School District and gifted enough kits for every 5th grade girl. Quite an achievement! She invited interested AAUW members to participate. The group is currently looking for a new meeting space.

Book Group – The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pip Williams is the book for February. The group will meet at Judy Trammel's home at 2 p.m. on Monday, February 2nd.

Java Break – Wednesday, January 21st at 10 a.m. at the Cookie Mill

Adjourn - VP President Elect Deb Narcisso adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Walden, Secretary



**Stay warm stay funny;
don't forget to laugh at
the cold.
Happy February**