



# BAY LEAVES

AAUW/San Mateo

<http://sanmateo-ca.aauw.net>

September 2025, Vol. 96, Issue 1

## Co-Presidents' Message

Maureen Buchner & Gayle Hardt

Welcome back everyone! We hope you had a safe and enjoyable summer.

In preparation for the upcoming 2025-2026 year, your Board of Directors attended a planning meeting in early August. We have some great programs coming up this fall, including a holiday party in December. Please check the calendar for more information about each meeting.

Thank you to all of our new (and returning) board members and committee chairs: Co-Presidents Maureen Buchner and Gayle Hardt; VP Membership, Mary Ann McKay; Financial Officer, Joanne Chee; Recording Secretary, Jane Bradley; Bay Leaves Editor, Gayle Hardt; Circulation, Anne Horgan; Directory, Joanne Chee; Interest Section, Mary Ann McKay, Public Policy, **Open**; Tech Trek/Stem, Maureen Buchner; Scholarships, Cindy Robbins-Roth and Jean Perry Verley. Their dedication allows the San Mateo Branch to continue.

Also, please note the Public Policy Chair remains open. This section is the heart and soul of AAUW. The Board discussed this at the planning meeting and are hoping we can find a person to be the contact for this Interest Section. The meetings would be arranged by the members of the group rotating among them. This should not be a time consuming or difficult task for a different person to arrange one meeting during the year. AAUW and AAUW CA have webinars on various topics of interest that could be shown with a Q & A afterwards. Please consider helping to get this group active again. Contact Maureen Buchner, 650-573-1604, [widgeonmab@yahoo.com](mailto:widgeonmab@yahoo.com), or Gayle Hardt, 650-477-2141, [ghardtlaw@gmail.com](mailto:ghardtlaw@gmail.com) to discuss it.

Again, welcome back. We're looking forward to seeing all of you throughout the year.

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## San Mateo Branch Calendar 2025

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Sept 13 | Celebrating the 2025 Tech Trek Campers<br>Redwood Shores Library<br>399 Marine Parkway, RC,<br>1:30 pm socializing, 2:00 pm speakers                     |
| Oct 11  | Myths and Facts of the Electoral College<br>Speaker: Gayle Hardt, LWV<br>Skyway Center, 655 Skyway Rd. Suite 110<br>San Carlos, 1:30 pm, 2:00 pm speaker |
| Nov 8   | TBD  |
| Dec 6   | Holiday Party Open House<br>Host: Gayle Hardt, 2:00 - 4:00 pm  |

## Drama Reading Group

There are two openings in the Drama Reading Group that are either permanent or substitute; the group is limited to 10 members. Anyone who would like to join is welcome to come to the next meeting on Oct. 8th.

The Drama Reading Group meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 9:30 am, from October to June, at a member's home where breakfast is served. The Chair conducts a brief talk about the playwright, then the play is read aloud with each member reading an assigned role. The monthly plays are distributed throughout AAUW CA chapters. If interested, please contact Marjorie Kobe.

## September General Meeting

### Tech Trek Campers

We kick off our fall meetings on September 13, at Redwood Shores Library at 1:30 pm for socializing, and 2:00 pm for the program. Once again, we will be meeting our 2025 campers who will share their stories with us. These are the current 8<sup>th</sup> graders who attended Camp Grace Hopper at Santa Clara University in July.

The campers, who are nominated by their teachers, are chosen by our branch committee from their applications, essays, and interviews. Many thanks to branch members Joanne McGlothlin, Anne Horgan, Joanne Chee and Maureen Buchner for volunteering to make it all come together. Also, thanks to Nancy Blachman for donating math books and intriguing puzzles for the whole camp. And, of course, we thank all of you for your generous donations for the scholarships that we awarded.

They were Nia Knox, Hannah Lipton, Julia Heneghan (Borel), Mila Morales (Abbott), Madizon Oliveras (Bayside), and Sophie Patra and Veda Kalmanje(virtual) (Bowditch). We are excited to report that high school alumnae Nyssa Mitra and Kirthana Warriar were chosen as counselors. Nyssa was a social coach for virtual camp, and Kirthana was a counselor at Camp Carson at UC Santa Cruz.

With education, science, and STEM research under attack in our country, it is very important that we promote programs like this for our young women. And, wait till you see what they built with the newspapers you saved!

**New Members** Please give a warm welcome to our newest members!

#### **Cathy Baird**

Cathy Baird has been a close friend of Mary Ann McKay for about 30 years. She has her Bachelors in Sociology from SFSU and worked as a social work supervisor for San Mateo County until she retired 5 yrs ago. On her interest and involvement form, she indicated she's interested in Mah Jongg as well as Legal Advocacy, reproductive choice, and has skills in hosting events, public speaking and a willingness to give rides.

#### **Linda Dopp**

Linda Dopp moved one year ago to San Mateo from Stockton, where she was a member of their AAUW branch. She is interested in Equity and Inclusion, Public Policy, Local Scholarships and Reproductive Choice. She is considering the Lunch Bunch and Walking group. She lists skills in hosting events and kindly offers to help as needed and to give rides.

#### **Jane Meyer**

Jane Meyer was born in the Bronx but moved to California in 1963. Jane enjoys travel, hiking, and dining out. By joining AAUW (she is also a member of Mid-Peninsula branch), Jane hopes to make new friends, promote education and equity, improve community connections and grow personally and professionally. She is interested in Lunch Bunch, the Movie Group, Foreign Affairs, and the Walking Group.

#### **Lelie Mooi**

Lelie Mooi is a friend of both Cathy Baird and Mary Ann McKay. She lives in San Mateo, but received her BSC, MSC and JD from University of Toronto. Lelie is a retired attorney who enjoys paddle boarding, reading, natural history and hiking/walking. She is interested in Tech Trek and local scholarships. She listed skills in computers and event coordination.

#### **Ruta Teismann**

Ruta Teismann has lived in the Bay Area for 15 yrs, currently in San Mateo. She has a Masters and PhD from Case Western Reserve in Psychology. Ruta worked as a family therapist and an executive and life coach. She developed workshops related to improved communications and personal development, with a focus on grief counseling. She has 2 grandchildren who live nearby. Her hobbies are dance, swimming, sewing, reading and biking. Ruta indicated she'll help as needed and give rides. She is interested in AAUW interest groups: Boggle, Book Groups, Foreign Affairs, Mah Jongg, Public Policy and Walking Group.

## Scholarship Committee

Cindy Robbins-Roth and Jean Perry Verley

This spring, our committee interviewed 10 impressive students from all three of our county community colleges. We selected 5 outstanding students to receive Ethel Gayman scholarships of \$6,000 each. Our five recipients demonstrated the ability to persevere through huge challenges to achieve their academic goals and maintain superior grades. This was done with a lot of support from peer groups and mentors.

**Samantha Guerrero** will be majoring in civil engineering at UC Berkeley this fall. Her path began with an early interest in math and science, evolving into a fascination with civil engineering. Samantha found herself drawn to the intersection of structural engineering and sustainability in the face of climate change and limited resources.

At 17, she became a primary care giver for her younger siblings. She was able to stay connected to her academic goals by tutoring kids in math and science. Living in Pacifica brought home the impact of climate change and waste on vulnerable communities. Samantha plans to put her civil engineering degree to work using structural engineering to create infrastructure able to withstand the challenges of climate change.

**Diana DeMartini** is heading to her top pick, UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business, where she will major in business administration, followed by an MBA. This career path had its roots in her own introduction to financial literacy as a survival skill. Diana and her mother moved to Germany when she was young, where her mom got a piano teaching certificate to start her music school. COVID and the invasion of Ukraine, where many of Diana's family members still live, have created financial and emotional stress for her family.

At the College of San Mateo, Diana studied government policies that impact families and researched ways to use financial planning to empower underserved communities. Diana plans to use her advanced education to become a financial planner, focused on guiding families toward achieving their financial and life plans.

**Me Me Hlaing Oo** will be majoring in Sociology and minoring in Gender and Women's studies at UC Berkeley. Three years into her medical training it was interrupted by the coup in Myanmar. Me Me began work as a nurse in secret community hospitals. While her parents pushed for her to finish her medical training, her exposure at Skyline College to social sciences and liberal arts classes as well as joining the Sexual and Gender Alliance club was the catalyst of her evolution to the social sciences.

She realized that education can provide her a lens through which she can question societal structures and create change. She plans graduate studies, continued contribution to the community as a lifelong learner and teacher, "with the humble will to use education as a practice of freedom."

**Jia Haria** will be majoring in Neuroscience at UC Berkeley. Her interest in the human brain began with a research project at the College of San Mateo. As a STEM honor student, Jia, also participated in the Women's Mentoring and Leadership Academy, providing tutoring and receiving support on her journey.

Jia chose this major to learn more about the human brain and its behavior mechanisms, with the aim of working in healthcare, social services and basic science research. Given the incredible complexity of the brain and behavior, Jia hopes to learn how to use emerging neuroscience technology to drive research and analysis that ultimately can help people with serious, currently poorly treated, brain disorders.

**Heba Alazzeah** will be majoring in computer science at UC Berkeley. She plans graduate studies in sociology, developing solutions that prevent technology from further marginalizing vulnerable communities. While at the College of San Mateo, Heba worked on a number of internships and projects including, among others, supporting web services for the community colleges to support student accessibility and sites for faculty. In her spare time, she worked on food drives with her mosque and Second Harvest Food Bank. Heba's goal is to bridge research with real-world implementation to ensure emerging technologies focus on fairness, accessibility, and inclusivity. She is committed to using her education to dismantle oppressive systems and create inclusive digital policies.

## The Ethel Gayman/AAUW Scholarship Fund

The AAUW San Mateo Branch signed a Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the San Mateo County Community Colleges Foundation regarding the Ethel Gayman Scholarship Fund, which is administered by the SMCCCF, to change the fund to a *pass-through* fund. It allows the Branch to distribute the funds as they see fit. This means there are no restrictions on the number of scholarships that may be awarded. Below is a synopsis of the MOU.

### *The Ethel Gayman/AAUW Scholarship Fund*

*The San Mateo Branch, American Association of University Women (“Donor”) and the San Mateo County Community Colleges Foundation (“Foundation”) establish the Ethel Gayman/AAUW Scholarship Fund (“Fund”) to be held, administered, and distributed by this Fund Agreement.*

- 1. Charitable Purpose of Donation  
To provide awards for full-time students at College of San Mateo, Skyline College, and Cañada College who transfer to four-year institutions of higher learning accredited by the American Association of Colleges and Universities.*
- 2. Selection Criteria Recipients will be selected in accordance with the criterion of the Donor and the general policies in effect for scholarships at College of San Mateo, Cañada College, and Skyline College, including the passage of Proposition 209, which restricts scholarship selection on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin.*

*Applicants must show evidence of the following for consideration:*

- 1. Be enrolled full time at College of San Mateo, Skyline College, or Cañada College,*
- 2. Have attained a minimum of a 3.5 GPA,*
- 3. Demonstrate financial need, and*
- 4. Indicate a definite plan to transfer to a four-year institution.*

*The Award winners will be selected by the Scholarship Committee of the San Mateo Branch of American Association of University Women from applications provided by the San Mateo Community Colleges Foundation and interviews with selected applicants.*

- 1. The Fund shall be administered as a pass-through scholarship fund under the provisions of the Foundation’s Fee Schedule, as it is amended from time to time.*

### **San Mateo County Community Colleges Ranked Among the best in California**

Top Community Colleges for Return on Investment

A state-wide analysis of Return On Investment (ROI) across 327 community colleges shows that the 3 San Mateo County community colleges are in the top 10.

Using a Price-to Earnings Premium (PEP) metric, they assessed how quickly students recoup their educational costs based on net price and median earnings 10 years after enrollment. All 3 of the San Mateo Community Colleges ranked in the top 10. Skyline College was number 1, Cañada College was number 5, the College of San Mateo was number 8. Congratulations to the San Mateo County Community College District!

AAUW should be very proud of our contributions to these deserving students.

### **In Memoriam**

This year we lost 3 outstanding members of AAUW.

**Karlyn Schneider** was longtime member of AAUW enjoying Great Decisions and leading Book Group II. Karlyn was a special education teacher who taught at Borel Middle School in San Mateo. She was also a dedicated storyteller at the Asian Art Museum.

**Marcia Leonhardt** was a dedicated member of AAUW. She was a past President, and was VP of Programming when she passed. MarcAugust 23, 2025ia was the Committee Chair of Broadway by the Bay League. She was also dedicated to the Burlingame Music Club, supporting young high school musicians.

**Ida Braun** was a member of AAUW for many years. She received her medical degree from Stanford. Ida was also a devoted member of the Burlingame Music Club. Her support of the high school classical musicians allowed them to compete and win at the BMC Music Competitions. Several music awards are named after Ida.

We will miss these lovely women very much.

## September 2025 Interest Sections

Mary Ann McKay,

### **Boggle (All Members Welcome)**

Judy Steele

Wed. Sept 17, at 1:30 pm

Host: Judy Steele

### **Book Discussion I**

Elissa James

Thurs. Sept 18, at 10:00 am

Host: Maureen Buchner

*The Secret Life of Sunflowers*, Marta Molnar

### **Book Discussion II**

Ramona Raybin

Thurs. Sept 25, at 12:00 pm

Host: Judy Podesta

*Shanghai*, Robin Sloan

### **Book Discussion III**

Ginny Brooks

Mary Ann McKay

Thurs. Sept 18, at 1:30 pm

Host: Elizabeth Jamieson

*Caste, The Origins of our Discontents*, Isabel Wilderson

### **Bridge**

Elissa James

Mon. Sept 15, at 12:30 pm

Host: Marge Denni

### **Drama Reading**

Marjorie Kobe

No Meeting in September

### **Great Decisions - Foreign Affairs**

Margo King

Thurs. Sept 11, at 10:30 am

Host: Sandy Shapiro

*The Future of NATO and European Security*

### **Lunch Bunch!**

Anne Horgan

Fri. Sept 19, at 11:30 am

*Kabul Afghan Cuisine*, 135 El Camino Real, San Carlos

RSVP to Anne Horgan

### **Mah Jongg**

Helen Hatchett

Wed. Sept 10, at 1:00 pm

Host: Helen Hatchett

Tues. Sept 23, at 1:00 pm

Host: Maureen Buchner

### **Membership: New and Prospective**

Mary Ann McKay

### **Movie Group**

Mary Ann McKay

Tues. Sept 16, time & theater TBD

*Downton Abbey 3*

### **Mystery Book Group**

Mikki Coffino

Fri. Sept 12, at 1:30 pm

Host: Barb Schotzko

*A Most Agreeable Murder*, Julia Seales

### **Walking Group**

Gerhild Klein

Tues. Sept 9, at 10:30 pm

*San Mateo Park*, Guide: Ruth Larimer

American Association of University Women  
P.O. Box 1465  
San Mateo, CA 94401-0816

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

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

**September 2025**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 AAUW Board Meeting	5	6
7	8	9 Walking Group	10 Mah Jongg	11 Foreign Affairs	12 Mystery Book	13 General Meeting
14	15 Bridge	16 Movie Group	17 Boggle	18 Book I Book III	19 Lunch Bunch	20
21	22	23 Mah Jongg	24	25 Book II	26	27
28	29	30				