

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN FAIRBANKS BRANCH

November 2023

AAUW SCHOLARSHIP FUND MINI FUND-RAISER

GIVING TUESDAY Nov. 28 Noon to 3pm

Home of Jodi Gouwens, Linck Estates, 924 Kellum, Unit #304,

Off Cowles & 10th, behind Arctic Bowl 907-474-9144

Last year this event was a successful and enjoyable fund-raiser for our scholarship fund. So come enjoy some snacks along with tea or coffee. Your guests and family members are welcome. Fill out an AAUW program survey for our branch.

Because the scholarship announcement will be published in January, our Board needs to know what funds are available by the end of December. Currently our Fairbanks AAUW branch has some 2024 scholarship funds from member donations.

This event will be both a mini garage sale and mini bake sale. Jodi is continuing to downsize resulting in a variety of items available along with a limited amount of baking this year. Cash, check, or credit card will all be accepted. Watch for an email closer to the date on what will be available.

Do you have some garage sale books or bake sale homemade cookies you can add? Perhaps a snack to share? These can be dropped off at Jodi's condo before the sale if you wish.

If you can't join us on Nov. 28, you can donate by contacting Gael Murakami at 907-479-0804 or gaelmurakami@gmail.com. You can also mail Gael a check made out to AAUW -- PO Box 83406, Fbks, AK 99708

FYI – GIVING TUESDAY was created in 2012 to counteract the spending of Black Friday and Cyber Monday with philanthropic giving to charities and non-profits in need of support. It has spread to become a national and international campaign.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, thankfully I just got my snow thrower back from the repair shop and am now equipped to deal with the snow in the weather forecast. Now to see if I can get the Christmas lights up without mishap...

I was delighted by the turnout to last month's meeting. It tells me that our branch members are willing to stretch beyond their comfort zone and learn new things. I'm looking forward to expanding on what we learned and am hopeful that we can put together a second program on the transgender experience.

It has become apparent that we need a greater level of branch member participation in order to a) at least continue the status quo, b) increase interest in joining AAUW, and c) become more relevant to the Fairbanks community. Regarding this, I have two issues to share.

We will **survey the membership** asking a variety of questions related to your participation in, and thoughts about, AAUW. There will be paper surveys distributed at the Giving Tuesday event at Jody Gouwens' home on November 28th, as well as by email. Secondly, we will **need new board members** to fulfill three important functions starting *next spring/summer*: Finance Officer,

Membership VP, and website management. Anyone interested in these jobs could join in anytime so that we can provide training and orientation ahead of time.

We all support the mission of AAUW and I'm proud of our members' dedication over the years. Our annual scholarships have made an important difference – financially and emotionally – to many local women for many years. I urge members to review [AAUW Public Policy Priorities – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#) and consider additional actionable and feasible ways that our small branch can impact our community that fall within these priorities chosen by all AAUW members. I have lots of ideas...and could use your help.

I look forward to visiting with you on November 28th...and I hope everyone has their snow tires on.

Cheers!

Carla Willetto, President

OCTOBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

More than 20 people attended the October program, *Understanding Transgender People: The Basics*. AAUW members were joined by the LWV and the NAACP. Two speakers from UAF gave an informative presentation that introduced us to words, concepts, and identities that are part of the transgender experience. Hudson Bolduc (Nanook Diversity & Action Center), and Casey McMillan (UAF Office of Rights, Compliance & Accountability) gave a primer on how to use pronouns, as well as sharing how important the use of preferred pronouns is to transgender people. They encouraged us to keep our minds open to the growing trend to respect people's preferred pronouns because language and culture have always been dynamic and ever evolving. They ended the presentation with a wonderful video that can be viewed here

<https://youtu.be/HbQZ7jAvgol?feature=shared>. The Zoom presentation was recorded, as well, and we will obtain the link for those of you who would like to watch.

BOOK GROUP

Date: Title/Author:

Location:

NOVEMBER 13 (Monday), 1:30 pm

Lessons in Chemistry: A Novel / by Bonnie Garmus

[fiction 2022]

Home of Jodi Gouwens, Linck Estates, 924 Kellum,

Unit #304, ph:474-9144

Off Cowles & 10th, behind Arctic Bowl

Book description: **Lessons in Chemistry** is not what you would expect. This humorous story with some quirky people and a unique dog deals with the life of a single mother in the 1960s. While dealing with serious issues of poor treatment of women in the workplace, the story takes some very unexpected turns. I found it to be an enjoyable read. (Jody)

This selection was originally for October, but it was put off to November when Jody postponed it due to her lingering cough. This book was a Mother's Day gift to me and, as a young woman with a degree in science facing the sexism of that era, I thoroughly enjoyed it! (Ritchie)

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Last month **Margaret and Larry Soden** spent two and a half weeks visiting their son Derek and family in Maryland. It was still nice and warm there. Some, but not all, of the trees turn in the fall so the colors were pretty. There were thousands of pumpkins at the farmers markets and lots of Halloween decorations. Derek is now working for the Federal Highway Administration and is a structural engineer and team leader in their bridges and structures division, so he is helping them get all that Federal infrastructure money out to the states to build and/or repair their bridges. They live in Poolesville, Maryland and are close to lots of historical places like Gettysburg, White's Ferry (where Robert E. Lee and his army crossed the Potomac), and are a fairly quick train ride into Washington DC. They also traveled to see granddaughter Molly at her college, St. Mary's College of Maryland, a small public honors college in St. Mary's City, Maryland which is one of those beautiful, green places with lots of red brick buildings.

Helen Howard taught a two day class in OLLI's recent add-on session called "Color Mixing in Watercolor". She is very excited about all the possibilities that watercolor offers: the techniques we use to let the water paint the picture for us, the different preparations of paint, the rocks and minerals used to make the pigments, and the different papers available that affect the results so differently. Her class of 12 was full and was a follow up to the classes she taught in the OLLI Spring session.

We are sad to learn that the husband of **Peg Ritter**, one of our longest term members, has passed away. Our hearts are with you, Peg, for your loss.

Ritchie and Mike Musick flew to Tucson and spent the month of October moving their '85 VW Westy up to Salem OR for its possible sale. Mike has two brothers in southern AZ and, when they drove north, they visited more family and friends all along the way, even Ritchie's best friend from Jr College Days whom she had not seen in many years. A highlight was taking grandson Connor, who is attending college in St George UT, to dinner. They drove west through Zion National Park and over Tioga Pass into Yosemite. A hop over to Sonora Pass allowed them to visit the YMCA camp Ritchie had worked at for a number of years and then to Clark Fork to visit where her sister's ashes had been deposited. The time frame they chose allowed her to attend her 65th high school reunion in Modesto, California. These are getting smaller (and duller) with each one. Mike asked how she wanted to celebrate her birthday in San Francisco, and she chose to visit Alcatraz. It was actually a very interesting day and a good way to avoid SF traffic. While visiting more family and friends they followed the coastline to Oregon and left the van with another brother who drove them on up to Washington to connect with still two more brothers. Mike has five little brothers and we saw them all! They flew home from Seattle and are thrilled to be back to the land of meager traffic and their cozy log home.