



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN FAIRBANKS BRANCH

January 2024

**Join us for the second part of our program focus on
the Transgender Experience**

January 22, 2024

7:00-8:30 pm

Stay tuned for a link to register for this Zoom presentation.

The 2023-2024 Board Members

President: Carla Willetto

cewilletto@alaska.edu

VP Programs: Ritchie Musick

ritchiemusick@gci.net

VP Membership: Gael Murakami

gaelmurakami@gmail.com

Finance: Gael Murakami

gaelmurakami@gmail.com

Secretary: Margaret Soden

margaretdsoden@gmail.com

President-Elect: open

Past President: Margaret Soden

UAF Representative: Carla Willetto

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2020-21 Committee Chairs and Special Interest Group Leaders are:

Scholarship Committee: open

House Tour Committee: closed

Book Group: Jodi Gouwens,

birchsongC@gmail.com

Games Group: Laura Walsh,

lauralynnwalsh@gmail.com

Writers Group: Not currently meeting,

contact Ritchie Musick,

ritchiemusick@gci.net

if you are interested

to get this going again.

Newsletter Editor: Ritchie Musick,

ritchiemusick@gci.net

Website Manager: Gael Murakami

gaelmurakami@gmail.com

Important Links

National organization:

www.aauw.org

Fairbanks:

www.fairbanks-ak.aauw.net

Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/AAUWFairbanksAKBranch)

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Dr. Tracey Wiese, DNP, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC

Clinical Director, Identity Health Clinic

Anchorage, AK

The idea of “transitioning” from one gender identity to another is mysterious and confusing to many of us. This lack of understanding can hamper our ability to be effective allies and strengthen our inclusivity. Dr. Wiese is a healthcare professional who directly serves those needing gender affirming care. She’ll help us with questions like... What happens during transition? Are there different types of transition? What are the healthcare needs involved?

This program will be full of information. It will not be a debate, and it won’t answer all our questions. We may come away still wondering, and still lacking full understanding. But learning is a process, and we hope this presentation provides a step forward as we strive towards true inclusivity and alliance.

We have opted for the Zoom experience to address the concern some of us feel about hosting a program on such a politically and emotionally charged topic. The meeting will utilize experienced gatekeepers to ensure that we can learn in a safe setting. **Look for the registration link soon!**

DECEMBER MEETING NOTES

We had a grand time at our annual Holiday potluck and gift exchange held in the Building 4 conference room at Raven Landing. A few white elephants reappeared from prior years. Members were generous in bringing new gifts and toys for the Christmas store at the Women's Shelter. A delightful array of food was available and a merry time was had by all.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Late last fall a survey was distributed to all 32 branch members. Twelve members completed the survey. A drawing from amongst the submissions was held and the winner will receive an original watercolor painting by our Finance Officer, Gael Murakami. *Congratulations to **Kayt Sunwood!*** I've not had the time to collate the results in a reader-friendly way, but some interesting upshots included:

Half the respondents have never done a **Two-Minute Activist** (some were unaware of what it was).

Seven were amenable to receiving the **newsletter** either as an attached PDF *or* in the body of an email. Three preferred it as an attached PDF; two preferred getting the branch news in the body of an email.

There was medium interest in a monthly gathering to celebrate **birthdays**.

Board positions - Two people expressed willingness to be Finance Officer; one person was interested in Membership. No one was interested in being President or Program VP.

No one offered their services to manage the **Branch Website** or our **Facebook** presence.

The most common reasons to belong to our branch included fellowship and the AAUW mission.

Two people listed ideas for program topics; most people did not offer up ideas for speakers, activities, or partnerships.

The Board will discuss what this survey tells us over the next couple of months. **If you would like to complete one, it's not too late.** Please check your emails for a December 2nd message from FairbanksAK AAUW. You've missed the drawing, but *we'd appreciate having your input.*

THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

We are entering the scholarship season, and we encourage all members to participate in this effort. This is our most important task this spring and it's a great way to make a meaningful, short-term contribution to the branch without committing to a year(s)-long board position. These scholarships mean a great deal to the recipients and it's very satisfying to be part of the process. How you can help:

- **Watch your email...**the new **scholarship flyer** will be sent to you soon. Please share it with anyone and any place that where you think local women would be interested in this kind of assistance. We are finalizing the application form and flyer and will send them separately.
- More urgently, we need 2-3 more members to **join the scholarship committee**. The task is to read and evaluate the scholarship applications using provided guidelines. This involves several hours of work and a committee Zoom session to discuss the evaluations. You must be available to do this during the first two weeks of March. Please **connect with Carla Willetto** to volunteer (cewilletto@alaska.edu, 907-347-1065, 907-452-8989).

General info:

- **Three \$2000 scholarships are planned.** Much gratitude goes to several members for their generous contributions and fundraising efforts.
- Scholarship application will be available on the web site: fairbanks-ak.aauw.net/scholarships.
- Applications are due March 1st, 2024. They should be submitted to AAUWScholarshipFairbanks@gmail.com, with the words "Scholarship Application" as the subject.
- Applicants must **a)** reside in Alaska's interior (north of the Alaska Range), **and b)** be pursuing a certificate or degree to advance their careers, change careers, or reenter the work force after a break.

WHAT IS A TWO MINUTE ACTIVIST?

This is a free online tool available for *anyone* to use. It is a quick and easy way to send emails and texts to your legislators to fight for equal pay, family leave, stopping sexual harassment, equality in education, *and more*. It takes just minutes and an internet connection to make your voice heard on issues impacting women and girls!

You receive e-mail notices and/or text messages when your advocacy is needed most. To become a "Two-Minute Activist"

1. Go to [Two-Minute Activist – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)
2. Click on the link for the issue you wish to support to read more about it, then
3. Fill in your name and address
4. Use the suggested message text or *personalize it as you wish*
5. Click on "Send Message" and the message will **automatically be sent to your US Senators and US Representative**



BE THAT TWO MINUTE ACTIVIST!

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Brenda Birdsall and friends drove to Anchorage to be interviewed by Antique Roadshow. The following is her description of the trip:

I enjoyed attending the Antique Roadshow last summer at the AK Native Heritage Center. It was fun to see the process from seeing my friend, Mary Ann Nichols, being interviewed to the final production of seeing her on TV Monday night. There was a lot of waiting: long lines before you were able to show your item, then waiting while the appraisers huddled and talked about her Vinyl Record. Then off to the Special "Green Room" where we were well taken care of: Volunteers feeding us sandwiches, drinks, and cookies. While we waited, there were folks and appraisers mingling and waiting to be called to the make up/ hair styling stations.. Finally it was Mary Ann's turn for her "makeover" (only one side that faces the camera though!)

As we were told to follow the Volunteers and other VIPs outside to be filmed; our 2 other friends from Fairbanks were able to join us . The behind the scenes to film/produce this was fascinating . So many people : the camera crew with multiple cameras, the sound production crew and the producer checking and rechecking "staging" everyone and everything just "So". But they couldn't control the interruptions of the Jets flying over the nearby Air Force Base. So retakes had to happen several times. Finally after reviewing , conferring and all agreeing, it was done. (It was a **Take** or whatever they say!)

Mary Ann was not to tell anyone the value of her Vinyl record as it needed to wait for the airing on TV,.. **IF** they decided to air it . We talked about the experience on our drive back to Fairbanks that evening. Mary Ann started having doubts: "They won't even air it. I didn't react with enough enthusiasm or exclamations! I can't remember what I did... I think I just stared at him."

Well Mary Ann you made it and we are all thrilled for you!

Editors note: Mary Ann was on the show last Monday with her one of six records from the first talking film, "Al Jolson". Her dad had worked on the production. Value was given as \$25,000. Well worth the trip to Anchorage, but not as much as the sentimental value.