



## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN FAIRBANKS BRANCH

APRIL 2024

### IT IS TIME FOR OUR SPRING SCHOLARSHIP LUNCH

APRIL 20 - 11:00 to 1:00

**MIGUEL'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT**  
1235 Airport Rd  
Shoppers Forum

#### The 2023-2024 Board Members

President: Carla Willetto

[cewilletto@alaska.edu](mailto:cewilletto@alaska.edu)

VP Programs: Ritchie Musick

[ritchiemusick@gci.net](mailto:ritchiemusick@gci.net)

VP Membership: Gael Murakami

[gaelmurakami@gmail.com](mailto:gaelmurakami@gmail.com)

Finance: Gael Murakami

[gaelmurakami@gmail.com](mailto:gaelmurakami@gmail.com)

Secretary: Margaret Soden

[margaretdsoden@gmail.com](mailto:margaretdsoden@gmail.com)

President-Elect: open

Past President: Margaret Soden

UAF Representative: Carla Willetto

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

Scholarship Committee: open

House Tour Committee: closed

Book Group: Jodi Gouwens,

[birchsongC@gmail.com](mailto:birchsongC@gmail.com)

Games Group: Laura Walsh,

[lauralynnwalsh@gmail.com](mailto:lauralynnwalsh@gmail.com)

Writers Group: Not currently  
meeting,

contact Ritchie Musick,

[ritchiemusick@gci.net](mailto:ritchiemusick@gci.net)

if you are interested

to get this going again.

Newsletter Editor: Ritchie Musick,

[ritchiemusick@gci.net](mailto:ritchiemusick@gci.net)

Website Manager: Gael Murakami

[gaelmurakami@gmail.com](mailto:gaelmurakami@gmail.com)

#### Important Links

National organization:

[www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)

Fairbanks:

[www.fairbanks-ak.aauw.net](http://www.fairbanks-ak.aauw.net)

Facebook page:

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

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

Come and honor our 2024 Scholarship recipients and  
enjoy lunch with them and our fellow members

Enjoy a Fajita buffet with beans, rice, and beverages  
(Alcoholic beverages available at cost)

\$20 per person

Please rsvp to [ritchiemusick@gci.net](mailto:ritchiemusick@gci.net) by April 18th



It is that time of year to again pay our dues for the  
coming year

If you wish to renew at the luncheon,  
both credit card payments and  
checks will be accepted

## NOTES FROM OUR MARCH ANNUAL MEETING

We gathered in the lovely condo of Margret Van Flein for homemade soup, bread, dessert, and beverages. The financial report was shared as was a review of year's monthly programs. Soon this month we will be voting on New National Board members and a by-laws change to remove the degree requirement for membership. Carla reported that we have 24 applicants for scholarships which our committee will review during the coming weeks. Carla led a discussion on the way forward for our branch. We have increasingly low attendance for many reasons, and few members are willing to run for office. She explained other ways that members may participate in AAUW programs. Our by-laws need to be reviewed and possibly updated.

The following officers were elected for the coming year: Carla Willetto will continue as President, Ritchie Musick will take over as Finance Officer, and Margaret Soden will continue as Secretary. there were no candidates for Vice President Program or Membership.

Gael Murakami will be moving to Seattle later this spring. A big round of applause was given to her for her many efforts for our Branch these past years. She currently is not only our Financial Officer and Membership Vice President, but maintains our Web Page and our Facebook Page. She has large shoes to fill, and we will miss her!

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

On April 3<sup>rd</sup> we all received an email entitled **AAUW Election 2024**. *PLEASE OPEN IT and VOTE!* There will be a link to click on, as well as a unique-to-you elector ID and password that will be needed in order to vote.

The big issue is that proposed bylaws changes include new language indicating the *sole requirement for membership is support of AAUW's purpose*. And yes, we have voted on this before...and AAUW is again trying to remove a college degree as a requirement for membership. Both the AAUW Fairbanks (AK) Board and the National AAUW Board encourage you to vote YES on open membership.

For over a century, our ability to evolve has been our strength. In these uncertain times, we need to include all allies, *regardless of degree status*. Our standing as a leading voice for gender equity demands we practice the inclusion we fight for.

Rest assured, an *open membership won't require changing our name or mission*. AAUW will remain the powerful organization we've always known, but will be open to a wider universe of equity allies. You can [learn more about open membership](#) here. Voting closes at noon on Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

I'm also thrilled to announce that we have three wonderful scholarship recipients to honor at the upcoming Scholarship Luncheon. This is one of our most meaningful and satisfying events of the year, so I look forward to seeing all of you on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Happy Spring!  
Carla Willetto, President

## INFORMATION ON ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

It will soon be time to renew your annual AAUW membership.

FY25 National dues remain the same (\$72) and branch dues continue to be (\$16), and state dues are (\$0) for a total of (\$88).

We will begin accepting dues at the Scholarship brunch on Saturday, April 20. We will accept checks, credit/debit cards or cash.

Regular members pay \$88, Life members pay \$16, and Honorary Life members are free. As of January 2024, all National dues are fully tax deductible. Instructions for paying on-line will be emailed once we have them from national.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

Your Scholarship Committee reviewed 24 applications for scholarships for women either returning to education, changing fields, or seeking further requirements for advancement.



**Leanne Bulgar:** After many life changes during past years, she is now able to return to education to earn a degree in Biological Sciences with a minor in Geology. She is currently a student assistant to a geocryologist at the International Research Center at UAF. Her dream goal is to become a research biologist, possibly in the field of mycology.

**Johanny Felix de McFarlane:** Having worked as a youth counselor at Family Centered Services of Alaska and dealing with Alaska Native Youth suffering from mental health issues, she chose to return to school and pursue a BA in Psychology. After seven years she now wants to achieve an Education Specialist Degree in School Psychology after which she will obtain her Nationally Certified School Psychologist Degree.



**Kenna Marchesseault:** She obtained her Certified Nursing Certificate through UAFCTC and passed her Licensure test in 2021. She worked as a CNA at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital until August 2023. She is currently a full time student at UAF working toward her pre-nursing qualifications certificate. She will then apply to the BS in Nursing program through UAF.

## BOOK GROUP

Jodi is still unable to host the Book Group, and it will again meet at Gael Murakami's. See the message from Jodi below in Have You Heard.

Date: **APRIL 8 (Monday), 1:30 pm**  
Title/Author: **The Berry Pickers: A Novel / Amanda Peters** [fiction, 2023]  
Location: Home of Gael Murakami  
4516 Wood River Drive (first right turn off Loftus)  
907-460-0424

**The Berry Pickers: A Novel / Amanda Peters [fiction, 2023, 320 p.]** In 1962 a four-year-old Mi'kmaq girl goes missing from the blueberry fields of Maine, sparking a mystery that will haunt the survivors, unravel a family, and remain unsolved for nearly fifty years. [Margaret Soden]

Jodi is looking for a couple of books: Maisie Dobbs books "An Incomplete Revenge" and "Among the Mad". If someone has these books, bring to book

## HAVE YOU HEARD?

**Jodi Gouwens** has moved from Fairbanks Memorial to Denali Center, Room 101 of the Aspen Rehab section. She will be there for further rehabilitation following surgery to repair a severely broken femur. She looks forward to returning home, but it is not easy when living alone and will take some time to prepare. Her cell phone number is 907-388-0025. She welcomes company!

***Update from Jodi:*** Some of the repair work on my right femur has "Displaced". The doctors are looking at new x-rays and a CT scan. It is possible I may be moved back to the hospital for another surgery. Currently I am in Rm 101 of the Aspen rehab section. Often mid to late afternoon are the best time to visit but I never know when they have plans for me.

**Brenda Birdsall** has another new address! She is now back up on the mountain at 2350 SkiLand Road, Fairbanks AK 99712.

**Ritchie Musick** has three paintings in the Fairbanks Watercolor Society's 25th Anniversary Art Show. Stop by the Bear Gallery in Pioneer Park and enjoy many lovely paintings by Fairbanks artists. The show is on through the month of April.