



GREATER WHITTIER AREA BRANCH AAUW NEWSLETTER

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

**January
2025**



MATH/SCIENCE CONFERENCE JANUARY 8 at Whittier College

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Our December 14 Branch meeting was a pure delight. We met in the afternoon at First Friends Church to avoid the traffic problems of the Whittier Christmas Parade held that morning. Paula Ocampo created a wonderful lunch of holiday treats and sandwiches, with the assistance of some of our marvelous member bakers. Our program by Claire Koehler and Ann Topjon told us of five winter holidays from across the world. They decorated five tables as part of their explanations, and the tables were very beautiful and informative. Diane Britton was our special speaker and she gave us great information about the Women and Children's Crisis Shelter in Whittier, and about the problems created by domestic violence in our community. She told how the shelter is supported and about the Shelter's Right Hand Thrift Store which is a major contributor to the shelter's continuing maintenance. We gathered a very nice offering of gift cards and monetary donations for the shelter. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this wonderful meeting.

Our next major project is the Math/Science Conference for 8th Grade Girls at Whittier College on Wednesday, January 8, early morning to 12:45 PM. We would welcome all branch members as volunteers for the day. If you have not given your name to Dolores Seidman, please email her with your information to deeseidman@gmail.com. Lunch will be served to all volunteers at the end of the conference on the college campus. We will be emailing all volunteers concerning their assigned activity very soon.

We are in need of volunteers in other areas of our branch. The nominating committee will begin working in the new year, and we need some committee members. Please contact me if you are willing to serve. We also need centerpieces for our March and May meetings. We generally have five round tables, and the centerpieces could be very simple. We will be using beige table cloths all year. Again, please contact me if you are willing to serve. S.heck4peace@gmail.com

A New Year is upon us, and my hope is we continue to have wonderful branch meetings at our new venue, First Friends Church. There will be no Saturday branch meeting in January, because of the Math/Science Conference. I would love to see many of you at our February 8, 2025 meeting where you will hear a wonderful speaker on Literacy and Economic Security. Have a Happy Holiday Season.

Sharon Heck, Branch President

HOSPITALITY

We will not have a branch meeting in January, instead, all of our efforts will be to support the Math/Science Conference for 8th Grade Girls at Whittier College on Wednesday, January 8, see the President's Message on page 1.

Our December branch meeting was an expression of community and holiday spirit. Over 30 people attended and it really was a big success due to everyone's contributions. Thank you: to our great program committee and presenters, Claire Koehler and Ann Topjon; for tasty treats provided by Marion Locke, Ann Topjon, Kay Clark, Margo Reeg, Belen Duarte-Sousa, and Carole Restovich; and help setting up by Cathy Arriola, Carole Restovich, and Marion Locke. I'm sorry if I've missed anyone, so many people reached out to help, Thank You All.

Paula Ocampo
Hospitality VP



Claire Koehler presented our donations for WCCS to Diane Britton.



Margot Eiser brought items for the Hanukkah table, including her family menorah.

MEMBERSHIP

The Greater Whittier Area AAUW Branch is approaching its 99th year! We have been active in advancing equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy for many years. As Membership VP, I have named this year as **The Year of Growth**. I encourage each of you throughout the year to help us continue the work of AAUW by inviting your friends, family, and even new acquaintances to join us. Good places to contact new members are yoga class, book clubs, church, or another group you attend. You can invite a guest to any of our meetings; book clubs, First Friday, or branch meeting.

Practice your elevator pitch, a quick 60-90 second introduction to GWA-AAUW, and ask for contact information. Be enthusiastic, AAUW is a wonderful organization. The committee is happy to contact any leads you may have.

SAVE THE DATE: We will be hosting a Meet and Greet this spring on March 22, 2025 at 10 AM to 11:30 AM. Begin thinking of who you might invite. The membership committee is meeting next month to finalize the event. Members can bring a dish to share, drinks or paper goods in lieu of a \$10 fee. We will send out a sign-up list in January. Several new members have joined us as a result of our past Meet and Greets. It is also a very fun social event.

Attention: I will be ordering name tags soon. The cost is \$10 and the deadline is January 15, 2025. Contact me directly; phone/text (652) 536- 3557 or email andrea92la@gmail.com.

Andrea Bellamy
Membership VP

LOS ANGELES INTERBRANCH COUNCIL (LACIC)

The following article is by Deanna Arthur, Chair of LACIC. GWA-AAUW members are always welcome to attend the LACIC meetings which include representatives from the various AAUW branches in the Los Angeles area.



LACIC JANUARY PROGRAM

JAN. 12, 2025 2-4 PM, VIA ZOOM

We are delighted to welcome Gloria Blackwell, our AAUW CEO, as our guest speaker this month. As you can imagine, Gloria has many demands on her time and we appreciate her willingness to meet with us “off the clock” so to speak. Many of you are quite familiar with Gloria’s background as she has been a long-time leader for AAUW and one whose career has been dedicated to promoting gender equality. Prior to assuming her current position, Gloria managed AAUW’s highly-esteemed fellowships and grants programs, awarding more than \$70 million in funding to women scholars and community programs globally. Before DEI became a household word, Gloria was reaching out to girls and women of color across all programmatic initiatives, including fellowships and grants, STEM for Girls, Money Smart and NCCWSL to name a few.

She holds a master’s degree in education and human development from the George Washington University, a bachelor’s degree in Foreign Service from the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, and studied at the American University in Paris. What you may not know is that she previously held leadership roles at the Institute of International Education. And her lifelong desire to make a difference through international education and gender equity continues to be inspired by her service as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon and later as a headquarters staff member.

It is with respect to her lifelong desire to make an impact on international education and gender equity that we have asked her to speak to us. Gloria serves as AAUW’s Main Representative to the United Nations where our organization has special consultative status on the Economic and Social Council. Many of us have only perhaps a vague idea of what this work entails. She’s going to fill us in.



Join Zoom Meeting:

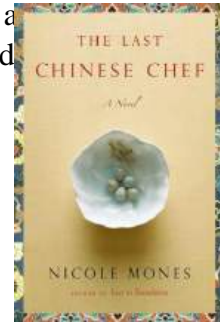
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89246630038?
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Passcode: 750330

JANUARY PROGRAM

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

GWA-AAUW Reads DEI book selection for this year is *The Last Chinese Chef* by Nicole Mones. This book is a fictional account of an American food writer traveling in Beijing. The main character, Maggie MacElroy, is called to China to settle a claim against her late husband's estate. While in China she interviews Sam, a Chinese-American, who is the last in a line of gifted chefs tracing back to the Imperial Palace. As he prepares elaborate cuisine for his audition for the Cultural Olympics, Maggie learns the meaning of Chinese cooking and through the eyes of Maggie, the reader will be introduced to the beauty, balance and art of Chinese cooking.



The author did extensive research to learn the origins and meanings of special Chinese dishes. As you read the book, you will learn that Chinese cuisine is not only about the ingredients. It is also about *guanxi*, or relationship. In addition to the fictional story of Maggie and Sam, the reader will experience the deep relationship food has as a connection to community and the past.

All GWA-AAUW members are invited and encouraged to read this year's book selection. Our DEI goal this year has been to focus on the rich, multicultural community we live in. To expand on our goal by reading the book, participating members will have an opportunity to discuss the book on March 26, 2025 at 1:30 PM and explore the flavors of Chinese cuisine at a restaurant whose chef was a source for Ms. Montes' research and his recipes were included in the novel.

What do you need to do to participate in this year's GWA READS?

- Read the book
 - Let Pat Dudley know you are reading the book *
 - Receive email updates with discussion questions and more information to attend the optional discussion session on March 26th.
 - Be informed of the location, date and time of an outing to a Chinese restaurant connected to the book. (Reservations will be required)
- *(kpudley2002@yahoo.com)

As you read, reflect on the cultural significance of food in the Chinese culture. Is this relationship with food unique to the Chinese? Perhaps you have insight into or experienced the role of food in other cultures. Sharing these personal stories will be a focal point of our in-person discussion.

Please join in this year's DEI branch activity.

Pat Dudley,
DEI Coordinator

MYRA LONG SCHOLARSHIP FUND

MLSF Board Report -December 2024

The Myra Long Scholarship Fund was incorporated in 1999 for the purpose of trusteeship for resources to be used for scholarships and other STEM related and educationally supportive projects in the greater Whittier area. In twenty-five years AAUW past and present members have been successful in reaching the established goals. The elected directors are very grateful to all who have shared their time and efforts with this worthy project.

MLSF COMMITTEE MEETINGS are held Quarterly on the following Tuesdays:

- ❖ February 4, 2025
- ❖ May 6, 2025
- ❖ August 5, 2025
- ❖ November 4, 2025

MLSF committee meets in the Board Room of the First Methodist Church in uptown Whittier, across from Central Park at 9:00 AM. Parking and entry are accessible, meetings last approximately two hours.

Mr. Chris Lavagnino sent a \$2,000 donation in his mother's memory. Jeanne Lavagnino was a longtime elegant member of the Whittier Branch. She was very interested in promoting the Arts and Music for young women.

We have received generous substantial donations from the Estates of Gwen Woirhaye, Ellen Larson, Leeba Lessen and Jeanne Lavagnino which will provide more scholarships and activities for the young women and girls in our community.

The Scholarship Committee needs to recruit for some new assistance.

Best regards, MLSF Committee
Barbara Gile, Chairperson



AAUW FUND

Thank you to each of you who have generously supported the AAUW Fund. If you still plan to donate, remember the deadline is December 31, 2024 to be paid to AAUW National.

Also, please select a member of our Branch to nominate for the AAUW Fund Named Gift Honoree. This is someone who provides leadership and contributes to the success of the programs and goals of our branch. This nomination form is due to Sheryl Crockey by January 4, 2025 either by mail, email or in person. (See the next page for the nomination form.)

Your donations support the AAUW Fund Fellows and Grant Recipients of which there are 31 from California. You will enjoy seeing these women by going to the AAUW California website at www.aauw-ca.org/aauw-2024-fund-fellows-and-grant-recipients.

The current recipients are listed with their schools and their fields of study. Eventually, their videos will be posted, so keep checking back to view this relevant project.

Thank you,

Sheryl Crockey, AAUW Fund VP



AAUW FUND NAMED GIFT HONOREE NOMINATION FORM

Each year our branch recognizes members who provide leadership and contribute to the success of the programs and goals of the branch. These members are the ambassadors who promote the mission of AAUW. In addition to an individual, a group or an organization that enhanced the mission of AAUW may be nominated.

Nominee:

Leadership:

Participation in Branch Activities:

Community Activities as Related to AAUW:

What makes this candidate an outstanding member of GWA-AAUW?

Nominated by:

Please return by Saturday January 4, 2025.

Attach additional pages if needed.

email tosherylc@icloud.com.

or

Mail: Sheryl Crockey
5507 Gregory Ave.
Whittier, CA 90601

THE HODGE FOUNDATION

The Hodge Foundation is a public endowment fund that has provided funds to supplement the library's budget for books and other printed materials. GWA-AAUW honors our members who have passed away by donating a book in their memory through the Hodge Foundation.

The Hodge Foundation has expanded their giving and partnered with the NICU at PIH. Bilingual picture books are being purchased for patients and their parents for the reading journey from birth to adulthood. This gives the families a purpose while they are staying in the unit. As the books are read, they accrue points and have circles that will create a bookworm. On Saturday, November 9, 2024, PIH Health Whittier Hospital celebrated the 50th anniversary of the NICU.



Paymaneh Maghsoudi, Whittier Central Library Director, thanked the Hodge Foundation for supporting the library. She stated how lucky they are to have the support of the Hodge.

Submitted by
Belen Duarte-Sousa
Hodge Foundation Liaison

PUBLIC POLICY

LOBBY DAYS will be held on April 8 in Sacramento and on April 9 via ZOOM.

Volunteers are needed to interview and Lobby our Legislators, Assemblymember Lisa Calderon and Senator Bob Archuleta. The state Public Policy Committee will be following bills as they are introduced in January and February and will select the 30 or so bills to watch during the Legislative session. They will prioritize the bills in March and announce the 3 Top Priority bills to be lobbied on during the Lobby Days interviews.

There will be a required briefing on March 30 via ZOOM for all members participating in Lobby Days. You can sign up to be part of the team on the AAUW-CA public Policy website page or email Margo Reeg to volunteer.

A registration form will arrive in early January 2025. Please be sure to complete and return the form so that you get necessary updates about Lobby Days, including your team and meeting details.

Lobby Days is a wonderful opportunity to meet with legislative offices and advance bills to promote gender equity and improve the lives of women and girls. We hope that you will join us in this important activity to promote our values.

“AAUW Priorities in Light of the Election Results” featuring Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy was the Public Policy Group discussion on December 4, 2024 on Zoom. The recording may be found on the AAUW CA website at www.aauw-ca.org/webinars/ or go directly to YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjLQGHCGWjM.

“2024 Revisions to Title IX: How they Impact AAUW Values and Public Policy Priorities” will be presented on Zoom by Kathi Harper, member of the Public Policy Committee and chair of the School Board Project. The meeting will be held on Thursday January 9, 2025 at 3:00 - 4:00 PM (PST). You can register online at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMlde-tpz0oHNGszzoXKEr8JhdhqTpcIkfA#/registration>

Margo Reeg
Public Policy Chair

INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS

We have completed the articles in our 2024 Great Decisions book. On Thursday, January 16, 2025 we will meet at the home of Sharon Heck, 6032 Comstock Ave., Whittier, CA 90601, 10 AM, to receive our new book, Great Decisions 2025, for those who ordered them. The book can still be ordered online by individuals.

We will review 2024 briefly and make assignment of discussion leaders for 2025. We will also view the video for Chapter 1, American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads, of our new book, as it will be discussed on Thursday, February 20, 2025.

Please RSVP to Sharon, because her street requires parking permits which she can acquire from the city for one-day use.

All are welcome to join us for great discussions.

See you on Thursday, January 16, 2025, 10 AM.

Sharon Heck



WRITING IS FUN

Writing is Fun! will meet at the home of Carole Restovich on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at 11 AM. Everyone is welcome. We write for our own pleasure, for sharing memories, and sometimes for cathartic reasons. You may write on anything you choose. In January we have often written to memorialize the good, the bad and the ridiculous in the year gone by. Others have written about what they hope the new year will bring. Pack a sandwich or salad and join us! Carole will provide drinks and dessert.

MODERN TRENDS IN LITERATURE

We do not meet in January.

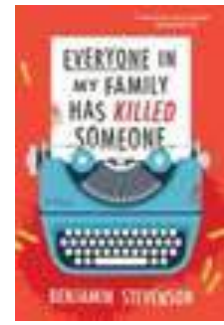
February 13, 2025 is the date of our next book discussion. You can read ahead as this is a very timely topic.

Grace: President Obama and Ten Days in the Battle for America by Cody Keenan

The discussion will be led by Carol K Anderson. The location is still to be determined, we will publish it in the February newsletter.

MYSTERY MAVENS

Mystery Mavens will meet on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 6 PM at The Original Roadhouse Grill, 15156 Whittier Blvd., Whittier, CA 90603, near Whittwood. Our January 15 book will be *Everyone in My Family Has Killed Someone: A Murdery Mystery Novel* by Benjamin Stevenson. It will be reviewed by Mandy Knight. Please let me know if you plan to attend. s.heck4peace@gmail.com



We need to begin collecting names of possible books for next year. Please limit your book selections to no more than two. We will vote on them in May.

Books for 2025

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------------------|
| March 19, 2025 | <u><i>Grime & Punishment</i></u> by Jill Churchill | Reviewed by Sharon Heck |
| May 21, 2025 | <u><i>The Thursday Murder Club</i></u> by Richard Osman | Reviewed by Janice Geiger |

Sharon Heck

MORNING BOOK

Happy New Year! We start this new year by reading an old classic: *East of Eden*, by John Steinbeck. In his journal, Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck called *East of Eden* “the first book,” and indeed it has the primordial power and simplicity of myth. Set in the rich farmland of California’s Salinas Valley, this sprawling and often brutal novel follows the intertwined destinies of two families, the Trasks and the Hamiltons, whose generations helplessly reenact the fall of Adam and Eve and the poisonous rivalry of Cain and Abel.

The masterpiece of Steinbeck’s later years, *East of Eden* is a work in which Steinbeck created his most mesmerizing characters and explored his most enduring themes: the mystery of identity, the inexplicability of love, and the murderous consequences of love's absence. Adapted for the 1955 film directed by Elia Kazan introducing James Dean and read by thousands, *East of Eden* has remained vitally present in American culture for over half a century.

We are so fortunate to have the great niece of Steinbeck as a member of Morning book – Mandy Knight, who has said she will share some of her memories about her famous great uncle. Linda Harris will lead our discussion on Monday, January 27, at 10 AM. Fay Weber will be our hostess: 2089 E. Skyline Dr., La Habra Heights. Paula Ocampo will provide refreshments. Please consider carpooling as parking is somewhat limited. I will provide a Zoom connection and will send out the link the weekend prior to the meeting. Please let Fay and Paula know if you are joining us in person by Friday, January 24, so they can plan accordingly.

The books for the rest of the year:

March 24: *The Lost Bookshop* (Evie Woods)

June 2: *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* (James McBride)

July 28: *Table for Two* (Amor Towles)

Ann Topjon, Chair (562) 665-1724

FIRST FRIDAY

We will start the 2025 New Year by meeting on the first Friday of January for our monthly social event. All are welcome and please bring friends and significant others!

Date: January 3, 2025
Time: 6 to 8 PM
Host: Margo Reeg
Address: 1001 Melgar Dr, Whittier, 90603

Directions: From Whittier Blvd turn north on Santa Gertrudes, to Janine and turn right, Melgar is the second left turn, the house is on the left side of the street.

Just remember to bring something sweet or savory and your choice of beverage for everyone's enjoyment.

Come and spend time together to celebrate the New Year.

Respectfully submitted by,

Belen Duarte-Sousa



DINING FOR \$\$\$\$

Happy New Year!



Our January Dining For \$\$\$\$ event is at De Luca's Italian Restaurant.

Date: Thursday, January 16
Time: 11 AM to 9 PM
Address: 16504 E. Whittier Blvd.

Located east of the Whittwood, past First Ave. on the north side of street. There is ample parking. De Luca's features Northern Italian specialties including: Classic Pastas such as Spaghetti, Ravioli, and Alfredo; Baked Pastas such as Lasagna, Ziti, Manicotti, and Parmigiana; most are available as meatless, Seafood, Chicken, Veal or Pork. They also have Salads, Pizza, freshly baked rolls and a full bar. You can check out the menu at <https://www.delucasitaliancuisine.com/>

Please support this local restaurant for their generous support of the Myra Long Scholarship Fund.

Andrea Bellamy



De Luca's Italian Restaurant
(serving Northern Italian cuisine)
is proud to support

**Greater Whittier Area AAUW
Myra Long Scholarship Fund**

Dining for \$\$\$\$ Event

Thursday, January 16, 2025
11:00 AM – 9 PM

De Luca's Italian Restaurant
16503 Whittier Blvd
Whittier, CA 90603
(562) 943- 1611
Dine-in or Take-out

Present this flyer to your server and 20% of your food and non-alcoholic beverage purchases will be donated to the Myra Long Scholarship Fund.

Please No soliciting on premises



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

December First Friday was hosted at the home of Jim and Shirley Stewart and it was a great holiday happening. Over 30 people attended and brought holiday goodies and drinks and the house was wonderfully decorated. Shirley gave everyone a tour of their historical farm house, circa 1880. It really was a treat.



Shirley Stewart's beautifully decorated tree.



Everyone had a great time at the Stewart's.

We missed two of our members at the December branch meeting; **Donna Smith** and **Dolores Seidman** both had falls at home and had to cancel at the last minute. They are recovering at home. We missed them both and wish them a speedy recovery and back on their feet soon.

Important Events in January 2025

- January 1 New Year's Day
- January 20 Martin Luther King Jr Day
- January 24 United Nations International Day of Education "Learning for Lasting Peace"
- January 24 United Nations International Day of Commemoration
 in memory of the victims of the Holocaust

We all want to hear about what is happening in the lives of our AAUW community. This section includes community news as well as your personal news, tips, and stories. Send me yours so I can include them in our next newsletter.

Paula Ocampo, Newsletter Editor
pocampo@aol.com
(562) 447-7483

JANUARY 2025

GREATER WHITTIER AREA CALENDAR

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| First Friday | January 3 (Friday) | 6 PM-8 PM | Margo Reeg's |
| Board Meeting | January 7 (Tuesday) | 7 PM | Zoom |
| Math/Science Day | January 8 (Wednesday) | 7:30 AM-12:30 PM | Whittier College |
| LACIC | January 12 (Sunday) | 2 PM – 4 PM | Zoom |
| Mystery Mavens | January 15 (Wednesday) | 6 PM | Original Roadside Grill |
| International Concerns | January 16 (Thursday) | 10 AM | Sharon Heck's |
| Writing is Fun | January 22 (Wednesday) | 11 AM | Carole Restovich's |
| Morning Book | January 27 (Monday) | 10 AM | Fay Weber's |

CHECK WITH YOUR SECTION LEADERS FOR UPDATES AND ZOOM INVITATIONS

Please consult our style sheet and follow it when preparing your newsletter article. It will save me a great deal of time and work. If you do not have a style sheet, please let me know and I will send you one. Thank you for your cooperation and for sending in your articles by the 15th of the month. **All submissions must be in WORD documents as attachments to emails. Please create the document within WORD itself rather than cutting and pasting into WORD. Please DO NOT use TABS. Please, do not type the articles within the email itself. Please give the article a descriptive name, not merely "newsletter article," and use that name in the subject line of the email.**

Please send articles by email on or before the 15th of every month, August through May to pocampo@aol.com

Newsletter Editor – Paula Ocampo

For more information, please visit our websites:

AAUW National www.aauw.org
 AAUW California www.aauw-ca.org
 GWA-AAUW www.whittier-ca.aauw.net

Greater Whittier Area -
 American Association of University Women
 PO Box 5333
 Whittier, CA 90607