



GREATER WHITTIER AREA BRANCH AAUW NEWSLETTER

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

**February
2025**



BRANCH MEETING – FEBRUARY 8, 2024 9:30 AM – FIRST FRIENDS CHURCH WHITTIER

Program

So, what is coming up in our February Program? AAUW is introducing us to Professor and City Council member, Mary Ann Pacheco.

Mary Ann Pacheco grew up in Southern California, attending schools in Lynwood and Downey, and receiving her college degrees at USC (BA) and UCLA (MA). For over 40 years, she has been a respected resident of Whittier in the Uptown area. For thirty-eight years of those years, she was a member of the faculty at Rio Hondo College as a professor of English, serving in a number of leadership roles including president of the Academic Senate and of the Rio Hondo College Faculty Association. Following her retirement, she was selected as a Fellow of the College and subsequently elected to the college's Board of Trustees where she served for five years.



Throughout her teaching career, Ms. Pacheco was considered an outstanding teacher while also serving as a teacher union leader on the local, state, and national levels. She was recognized for her leadership with several prestigious awards including the Cesar E. Chavez Awards from both the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association. She has been a long-time active member of her parish (St. Mary of the Assumption), and currently she is coordinating the lector ministry. She has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Boys and Girls Club of Whittier and Pico Rivera and the Hispanic Outreach Taskforce (HOT); she is a former president of Soroptimist International Whittier. Ms. Pacheco was elected to the Whittier City Council in April 2024, representing District 1 which includes parts of Uptown Whittier and parts of the western and southern parts of the city. Mary Ann will be presenting information on Financial Literacy, both its benefits and the pitfalls of not being informed.

Please join us on February 8th to welcome Mary Ann Pacheco and to gain some insights on financial literacy. We hope to see you all there!

Claire Koehler, AAUW Program Director
Ann Topjon, Program Committee

HOSPITALITY

You are invited to our first branch meeting of 2025! I look forward to seeing you as you join us for a great presentation by Mary Ann Pacheco and also an opportunity for camaraderie, to support one another, and to plan our next activities.

Our volunteers are critical, not just to get the job done, but to make the meeting more fun. The tasks are simple when there are many hands; greeting, setup before the meeting, cleanup after the meeting, pickup supplies, bring baked goodies, or add the final touches to the tables. Please contact Paula Ocampo to sign up for February.

Date: Saturday, February 8, 2025

Time: 9:30 AM Social Time
10 AM Meeting begins

Location: Fellowship Hall
First Friends Church Whittier
13205 Philadelphia St.
Whittier, Ca. 90601



Directions: We will meet in the Fellowship Hall. The entrance is off of the courtyard facing Washington Ave. Parking is off of the alley in the rear.

There is also additional parking available across the street on Washington Ave. It can be accessed from the alley running between Washington and Bright, turn north from Philadelphia.

Meal: Morning buffet to include snacks and drinks

Meeting price: \$10 /person*

Please RSVP if you plan to attend. We do need to know how many people will be there so we can plan for seating and refreshments. Send your email to Paula Ocampo at pocampo@aol.com or phone/text to (562) 447-7483.

Paula Ocampo, Hospitality VP
cell (562) 447-7483
pocampo@aol.com

Kindly remember to wear your AAUW name badge.

*Please note, since we are not having a catered meal, you don't need to pay the \$10 if you RSVP and have to miss the meeting.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

AAUW National has a challenge for the branches called the 5 Star Program.



Each branch is encouraged to complete a survey about the year's activities. I completed the survey and we were awarded 3 Stars. I received the following letter from Diane Owens, a Californian and Director on the AAUW National Board. "On behalf of the AAUW Advancement Committee, I want to thank you for submitting your FY 24 Branch Survey this year. I also want to congratulate you, your branch board and the entire Greater Whittier Area Branch membership for earning 3 Stars this past year! AAUW appreciates your dedication to our mission of achieving equity for women and girls and the time and effort spent completing the report!" I also thank everyone for all that you have done, especially with our many Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) activities.

We still need volunteers to serve on our nominating committee. If you are at all considering a leadership position in the branch, please let me know ASAP. New members would be welcomed with open arms. S.heck4peace@gmail.com

Our Math/Science Conference for 8th Grade Girls at Whittier College on Wednesday, January 8, 2025 went beautifully. We had at least 25 branch volunteers for the day and they were so appreciated. (See Dolores Seidman's article in this newsletter.) Lunch was served to most of the volunteers and the speakers at the end of the conference on the college campus. We even delivered box lunches to some of the speakers who were unable to stay.

A story has come to me regarding one of our 20 speakers, Dr. Christina Scott, a psychology professor at Whittier College. She and her two young daughters were evacuated from their home in Sierra Madre, the night before our conference. They spent the night on air mattresses at the college, and she still gave fantastic presentations in the three workshops on Wednesday. Thank you so much Dr. Scott! My biggest fear for the day was an electrical outage because of the winds. It did not happen and everything went smoothly. Thank you to all who helped.

Here are a few quotations from the hundreds of 8th Grade student evaluations:

"Really fun, had a lovely time, very nice campus – cool jobs I've never heard of" /
"Good Job!" / "Very fun, I got a lot of information, a lot of advice, made me feel motivated"
"I think this was an awesome event, I was actually interested" / "Speakers and everyone were friendly and inspiring" / "They were all so fun to learn from." / "I really enjoyed being here. Thank you for having me. I learned many things about my dream career and more." /
"Amazing experience!" / "The conference overall was very inspiring and helpful." /
"Very good" / "I LOVED IT!"

A New Year is one month in, and my hope is we continue to have wonderful branch meetings at our venue, First Friends Church Whittier. I would love to see many of you at our February 8, 2025 meeting where you will hear an excellent speaker on Literacy and Economic Security. Together we can make a difference in our community and in our world for women and girls.

Sharon Heck, Branch President

AAUW MISSION STATEMENT – To advance equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

MEMBERSHIP

SAVE THE DATE! We will be hosting our annual Meet and Greet in March

When: Saturday, March 22, from 10 AM 11:30 AM

Where: First Friends Church Whittier

13205 Philadelphia (entrance off of Washington Ave., parking in the rear off of the alley)

This is also Women's History Month, the perfect time to invite prospective members to our annual Meet and Greet Event. Our guests will be able to learn about our wonderful organization in a casual setting while meeting some of our members. We encourage our new members to participate and share their experiences. Please reach out to your work associates, book clubs, gym/yoga group, neighbors, business associates, and recent college graduates. Invite them to join us or send them the flyer when it is completed.



Admission:

Guests/nonmembers: Free of Charge

Current members and spouses: \$5.00*

*Admission is waived if a member brings an item for the menu. *Please sign up in advance and let us know what you are bringing.* If you need ideas, here are a few, including; quiche, breads, pastry, cheese, bagels (cut in half) cream cheese, dip/hummus, pita chips, veggies, fruit cut up, cheese plate, crackers, and tea sandwiches.

Please let us know the names of your guests so we can have name tags ready for them; send your RSVP to MembershipGWA@gmail.com or text 562-536-3557.

Note: We have had many new members join our branch since the publishing of our last yearbook. For your information, we will be sending a separate list of new members complete with names, addresses, and phone numbers.

Attention: I will be ordering name tags soon. The cost is \$10 and the deadline is January 31, 2025. Contact me directly; phone/text (652) 536- 3557 or email andrea92la@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Membership Committee Chair Committee - Andrea Bellamy

Members - Linda Harris, Mandy Knight, Margo Reeg, Georgine Sweeney, Karen Van der Baan

MATH SCIENCE DAY

GWA MATH SCIENCE VOLUNTEERS - January 8, 2025

Thanks to the following members who helped to make the day a success under the leadership of Sharon Heck.

Andrea Bellamy

Pat Dudley **

Dolores Gonzales-Hayes

Kaye Kidwell

Linda Lawson *

Bea Myers **

Margo Reeg *

Pauline Rogers *

Lisbeth Solberg

Ann Topjon

Nadine Wilcox

Kay Clark *

Carole Duff *

Quincey Grace

Mandy Knight *

Greta Lebow

Paula Ocampo *

Carole Restovich *

Dolores Seidman

Ana Sosa *

Karen Van der Baan *

Sheryl Crockey *

Barbara Gile

Susan Halliday

Claire Koehler

Marian Locke

Rose Pringle

Lynda Richardson

Dede Shatzen

Georgine Sweeney

Fay Weber

* Also helped at the Packet Party

** Packet Party Only



The photos above show one of the presentations. Thanks also for use of the facilities at Whittier College including great classrooms with audio and visual equipment.

Thank you,

Dolores Seidman, Math/Science Volunteer Coordinator

AAUW FUND

Your AAUW Fund donations are making a positive difference by supporting women scholars who are pursuing full-time study to complete dissertations, conduct postdoctoral research full-time, or prepare research for publication for eight consecutive weeks. They are helping women and girls through service in their communities, professions, or fields of research.

There are 31 AAUW Fund Fellows and Grant Recipients located in California. The AAUW Fund Committee has posted their information, including photos and videos, on the AAUW-CA website. If a video has been posted you will find it noted at the end of the recipient's information. The note indicates to which of the three videos it was added. Keep checking back as more videos are added daily.

<https://www.aauw-ca.org/aauw-2024-fund-fellows-and-grant-recipients/>

When you watch the videos, you will discover that there's such a wealth of talent, so watch, learn, and enjoy. You can share the wealth of knowledge and learn something new from these amazing Fellowship and Grant recipients.

Thank you for your support!
Sheryl Crockey, AAUW Fund VP

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

The topic for the February branch meeting DEI exercise is The Dual Meaning of Privilege. For those of you in attendance at the November meeting, you will recall the exercise provided insight into the influence of Headwinds and Tailwinds in one's life journey. As extension of that topic, we will look at the concept of Privilege.

GWA Reads DEI book selection is **The Last Chinese Chef** by Nicole Mones. Fourteen members have indicated they are reading the book. Readers will be receiving the discussion questions and information on the optional March 26 in-person discussion and updates on the planned DEI dining experience. The discussions will center on the role of food in Chinese culture, rituals and traditions and expand to looking at the influence of food in other cultures. If you have not yet let Pat Dudley know of your intent to participate in this year's reading, please contact her. Kpdudley2002@yahoo.com.

SAVE THE DATE

GWA AAUW has partnered with the Whittier Public Library to host the Reel Club movie that will be held at the Central Library on March 17th at 6 PM. March is Women's History Month and the topic of the movie will be an inspiring woman in history who has made contributions to equity for women and girls. Detailed information on the movie selection will be in the March newsletter. Plan to attend.



DIVERSITY DATELINE

Holiday or Observance	Religious Group	Date
Magha Puja Day	Buddhist	February 12 or 13, 2025
Lailat al Bara'ah	Muslim	February 13 (evening) or February 14, 2025
Nirvana Day	Buddhist	February 15, 2025
President's Day	USA secular	February 17, 2025
Maha Shivaratri	Hindu	February 25/26, 2025
Ramadan	Muslim	February 28 (evening) - March 30 (evening) 2025



- Magha Puja Day is also known as Sangha Day. It is a celebration in honor of the Buddhist community and commemorates the first gathering of 1,250 monks who were ordained by Gautama Buddha.
- Lailat al Bara'ah is also known as the Night of Forgiveness. On this night, God fixes people's destiny for the coming year. It is marked with prayer and fasting.
- Nirvana this day is an opportunity to reflect on one's future death and on people one has known who have recently died. Nirvana is the cessation of all existence which is achieved at death.
- President's Day is a federal holiday (USA) celebrated annually on the third Monday of February and celebrates the life and achievements of all former and current presidents of the United States. It is held on this date because it falls on or near the birthday of George Washington, the first President of the United States.
- Maha Shivaratri in the United States is annual festival honoring Shiva, the Hindu God of destruction. People celebrate by fasting for a whole day and staying awake all night.
- Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide. It is a month of fasting (sawm), prayer(salah), reflection, and community. Muslims hold that all scripture was revealed during Ramadan.

Holiday/Observance	Date
Black History Month	February 1-28, 2025
Ground Hog Day	February 2, 2025
National Carrot Cake Day	February 3, 2025
National Girls and Women in Sports Day	February 5, 2025
Chocolate Day	February 9, 2025
International Day of Women and Girls in Science	February 11, 2025
Valentine's Day	February 14, 2025
Susan B. Anthony's Birthday	February 15, 2025
Random Acts of Kindness Day	February 17, 2025
National Chocolate Mint Day	February 19, 2025
World Day of Social Justice	February 20, 2025

PUBLIC POLICY

Why AAUW Public Policy Priorities Matter
by Nancy Major, Member AAUW California Public Policy Committee

Why do AAUW's Public Policy Priorities matter? They shape the actions that we take as an organization, socially and legally.

AAUW's mission is to advance equity for women and girls. Our Public Policy Priorities guide how we encourage active citizenship toward the goal of advancing our mission. There are four branches to our Public Policy Priorities: Economic Security, Equal Access to Quality Public Education, Social and Racial Justice, and Increased representation of Women in Leadership roles. Each of these priorities is further broken down into several action-oriented subcategories, such as enforcement of Title IX and passage of the ERA.

Our 2023-25 priorities can be found at <https://www.aauw-ca.org/public-policy-priorities-ppp-revised/>.



As active participants in society we can help shape the laws and society that govern us, such as healthcare, environmental policies, sex education, curriculum and book banning, housing, childcare, voting rights, immigrants' rights, sexual harassment, domestic violence, racial and LGBTQ discrimination, and Title IX enforcement. We "advocate" or promote our mission through research, education and lobbying for legislation on the international, national, state, and local levels.

History has shown that our advocacy has made a big impact on national, state and local laws. In California alone, you can see the laws that AAUW sponsored, authored, and/or promoted, including those that were passed in the most recent session by going to [AAUW California Bill Tracking Report 2024 - Google Sheets](#). AAUW is also doing impactful work internationally, working to curtail human trafficking and promote civil and human rights for all immigrants, including through participation in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Over the next four years, there will be a lot of opportunities to use this legislative advocacy to push back against attempts to overturn long standing human rights and civil rights protections.

Our Public Policy Priorities also shape our efforts to push forward programs that break through educational and economic barriers for women such as speaker programs, scholarships, oversight of local school boards, leadership and salary training, STEM opportunities for students, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs.

Why do our Public Policy Priorities matter? They make us the most effective advocates for our collective mission to protect and expand gender equity. At the branch and individual levels, we can take advantage of as many opportunities as possible to operationalize our Public Policy Priorities, and through this work to actively promote AAUW's mission. AAUW as an organization relies on the branches to stay informed and to keep track of where our Public Policy Priorities may fall short, to form coalitions with local allies who have similar missions, and to assign branch members to focus where we can have the most impact.

INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS

We received our 2025 Great Decisions books at our January 16 meeting.

On Thursday, February 20, we will meet at the home of Sharon Heck, 6032 Comstock Ave., Whittier, CA 90601, 10 AM, to discuss Chapter 1, America at a Global Crossroads.

We will view the video for Chapter 2, The Evolution of U.S. Leadership in the Global Economy: Dilemmas and Choices, as it will be discussed on Thursday, March 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, February 20, 2025, 10AM.

Great Decisions 2025 can still be ordered online by individuals at the Foreign Policy Association website, https://www.fpa.org/great_decisions/?act=gd_materials. An E-book version is also available for Kindle, Nook and several other providers.

Sharon Heck
s.heck4peace@gmail.com



WRITING IS FUN

Writing is Fun! (WIF!) will meet February 26 at the home of Carole Restovich at 11 AM. The writing topic is anything you choose. If you would like a prompt, you might consider writing about the historic, and devastating, fire Angelenos have recently experienced. Bring a sandwich or salad and Carole will provide drinks and dessert. Everyone is welcome, even those who come just to listen!

Carole Restovich,

MYSTERY MAVENS

Mystery Mavens will not meet in February. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, 6 PM at The Original Roadhouse Grill, 15156 Whittier Blvd., Whittier, CA 90603, near Whittwood. Our March book is listed below. Our members should begin thinking of books to nominate for next year, because we vote on them at our May 21, 2025 meeting. Please do not nominate more than two books.

Books for 2025

March 19, 2025 Grime & Punishment by Jill Churchill Reviewed by Sharon Heck
May 21, 2025 The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman Reviewed by Janice Geiger

Sharon Heck

MORNING BOOK

We do not meet in February, but here is the list of books we will be reading and discussing for the rest of the year:

March 24: The Lost Book Shop (Evie Woods)
June 2: The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store (James McBride)
July 28: Table for Two (Amor Towles)

Happy reading, and looking forward to seeing you all in March!

Ann Topjon 562-665-1724



MODERN TRENDS IN LITERATURE

The book we have selected to read for February is:

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

Reviewer: Carol K Anderson

Host: *To be determined*

We really miss Myra Weiss; her presence, wit, and insight, as well as hosting us at her home so many times last year. We had planned on meeting at her house next month. Unfortunately, we don't have a new host at the time of the newsletter publishing. When we know, we will send an email with the details. Please contact Paula Ocampo, pocampo@aol.com if you would like to attend.

LA CUISINE

Let's Celebrate the Lunar New Year!



La Cuisine members invite AAUW members and their guests
to a dinner at

SILVER PALACE RESTAURANT
15326 East Whittier Blvd., Whittier

When: January 29, 2025
Time: 5:30 p.m.

Price per person: \$32.00
(Includes multiple delicious Chinese dishes and tea)

Please plan to pay with cash.

Feel free to dress for the occasion

Please RSVP to Shirley Stewart at stewartjs8109@gmail.com by January 26
as we need to provide a count to the restaurant.

FIRST FRIDAY

The February First Friday event will be held at the lovely home of Carole Restovich

Date: Friday, February 7, 2025

Address: 10413 Portada, Whittier

Remember to bring something sweet or savory and your choice of beverage to share.

Significant others and friends are always welcomed!

Respectfully Submitted by:

Belen Duarte-Sousa

DINING FOR \$\$\$\$



This month we will return to The Stand.

Date: Thursday, February 20

Time: 11 AM to 9 PM

Address: 13815 Whittier Blvd.

(Located directly across the street from LA Fitness on Whittier Blvd.)

The Stand is described as serving American classic food redefined. It's a casual, upbeat venue offering an interesting array of burgers, sandwiches, wraps, generous entree salads, shakes and desserts. There are also a number of vegan, vegetarian and gluten free options too. Our Whittier location features a full bar as well as craft beer and wine on tap. Patio dining is available as well as indoor eating. For our February fundraiser, they are donating 20% of your bill to the Myra Long Scholarship Fund! It is a great opportunity to try a new venue and to support our scholarship fund at the same time. Remember to bring a flyer for each bill at your table. The flyer in this newsletter will also direct you for use online or with an APP. Come participate in this event! You'll be glad you joined us.

Andrea Bellamy



COMMITTED *To* COMMUNITY

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**GREATER WHITTIER AREA AAUW
MYRA LONG SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

20% OF YOUR ENTIRE PURCHASE
WILL SUPPORT THIS CAUSE

FEBRUARY 20TH 11AM-9PM

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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Sharon Heck lost her youngest brother, Elwin, on Sunday, January 5. He was 79-years-of-age and had been on hospice. Sharon will travel to Michigan on January 23 to attend his memorial service, and to spend some time with her three surviving siblings. We wish her the best in her travels and in this time of mourning.



It's poignant to reflect on how we get to know more about people after they pass. **Carol Shupek** recently lost her husband John Shupek and she has generously shared her thoughts of him with us: "He died on Christmas Day after three years of being bedridden. During that time, he was constantly re-inventing ways to be creative using the computer and television from bed to work on his website Skytamer Images, as well as entertaining our family with movie nights. His motto was, "I am not a quitter" and he was not until the very end. We are blessed to have had him in our lives, and he will be forever with us in spirit."



I am sure you have had **Cindy Birt's** email for a long time. However, she recently had to change and would like you all to update your contacts. Her new email is cindybirt1@gmail.com



Everyone must be very busy with the New Year! I haven't received much news about what's 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

February 2025

GREATER WHITTIER AREA CALENDAR

La Cuisine (RSVP now)	January 29 (Wednesday)	5:30 PM	Silver Palace Restaurant
Board Meeting	February 4 (Tuesday)	7 PM	Zoom
First Friday	February 7 (Friday)	6 - 8 PM	Carole Restovich's
Branch Meeting	February 8 (Saturday)	9:30 AM	First Friends Church Whittier
Modern Trends	February 13 (Thursday)	6:30 PM	TBD
International Concerns	February 20 (Thursday)	10 AM	Sharon Heck's
Dining for \$\$\$\$	February 20 (Thursday)	11 AM - 9 PM	The Stand
Writing is Fun	February 26 (Wednesday)	11 AM	Carole Restovich's

Save the Date

AAUW and Reel Club	March 17 (Monday)	6 PM	Whittier Central Library
Meet & Greet	March 22 (Saturday)	10 - 11:30 AM	First Friends Church Whittier
GWA Reads (DEI)	March 26 (Friday)	TBD	TBD

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

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