



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

November finds many of us giving gratitude and "counting our blessings." I know our members are appreciative of how active and forward-thinking our AAUW North Tahoe Branch has been and continues to be. Our programs are really making a difference in many women's and girls' lives and our interest groups add a rich dimension to our own lives.

**A new program that was piloted this past year is Gov Trek.** This is a seven-week online experience for high school junior and senior girls that gives them a chance to see what running for office and being in public service may be like. Jo Ann Cobb and Barbara Ramsey participated last year as coaches and found the program quite worthwhile. Gov Trek takes place on Saturdays in February and March. We will be working with North Tahoe High School to encourage girls to participate. **We'll also be looking for coaches!** The goal is to set up a Gov Trek committee. More information will be forthcoming, so stay tuned!.

— *Priscilla Mills*

## LEADERSHIP MEETING

**Thursday, November 9, 2023**  
10:00 am via Zoom

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS



**Thursday, December 7**



## MEMBERSHIP

**Meet our new members!**

### Judy Brown

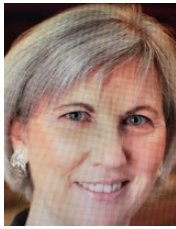
Thank you all for making me feel so welcome. I thoroughly enjoyed the 40th Anniversary Party and learning about the wonderful things the club accomplishes through the various programs.

After having a vacation home at Donner Lake for many years, Truckee seemed like the perfect place to continue our retirement. That was 13 years ago and there are no regrets.

I am lucky to have two of my six grandchildren living here. It is fun to share in their activities and hopefully that is keeping me a bit younger. Luckily the rest of the family loves to visit and enjoy this beautiful place.

As a member I am looking forward to getting to know more of you lovely ladies and participating in the various groups. I am anxious to start with Culinary Capers and continue with other activities.

## Amy Horne



In 1998, I bought my home on the banks of the Truckee River sight unseen from a hospital bed in Portland, Oregon on the recommendation from my soon-to-be ex-husband. (I was recovering from being caught in an avalanche on Mt. Hood.) My home is perfect for me. Originally from northern Virginia, I have lived in many states – up and down the east coast, the Midwest, Oklahoma, the Pacific Northwest – and decided to stop moving and put down roots. A small mountain town was the place for me. Like many of us here, I put priority on lifestyle rather than career. I originally came to be research director at the Sierra Business Council. I found my calling when I was appointed to the Lahontan Water Quality Control Board. Ten years ago, aged 59, I entered law school to expand opportunities for supporting myself. Internships took me to Sacramento, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. While I loved the experience and the work, I learned urban life no longer appealed so I came back to Truckee. A lifelong environmentalist, I live a simple life. I love learning about many things from history to cultures around the world. A new interest is genealogy; by learning about my forebears, I see how historical events connect to me. I share interests with many of you and look forward to being part of the AAUW community!

## Debbie Howle

## Marianne Mika



I moved from Southern California to Incline Village over twenty years ago, after retiring from public service with the City of Los Angeles. Prior to my City service, I was an educator and an elementary school administrator. Once in Incline, I obtained a Nevada real estate license and worked in that field for seven years. Now I'm happily retired from everything except enjoying life.

Family is very important to me. I have a son and three daughters and one by one they all settled

in the Tahoe area which keeps me busy and connected.

For several years I belonged to the Tahoe Nevada Branch of AAUW in Incline but was unable to continue due to health problems that have since resolved. Dianne Lange is the close friend who encouraged me to join the North Tahoe Branch, which I've found to be very welcoming. Although I have not participated much to date, I have joined Great Decisions and hope to keep up with the monthly walking group. My interests include music, reading, public affairs, crocheting and "dementia" bridge.

Getting to know the members of the North Tahoe AAUW and becoming a part of the many activities available is something I look forward to with great anticipation. Working toward gender equality and greater opportunities for women and girls is a critical mission and something I completely support.

## Beth Sammis



My husband and I left California about 38 years ago for Maryland where we raised our daughter. Regaled by all our California stories and visits back to see her uncle and grandfather, our daughter became smitten with California and moved first to San Francisco and then to Truckee. We bought a home in Truckee in 2020 expecting to spend our summers here but the birth of our two grandsons and the beauty of the greater Tahoe area caught our hearts. (My husband still works teaching Political Science so he is in Maryland during the academic year – hoping that will change soon!) I "retired" from my career in insurance in 2016 having held positions as a health insurance executive and insurance regulator at the state and federal level. Subsequently, I served as president of a consumer health insurance advocacy group and have been teaching Introduction to Sociology and American Government at our local Maryland community college. I am excited to be a part of a group dedicated to empowering young women and hope all of you will point me to the hidden hiking gems of this spectacular area!

## Gay Thomas



Thank you, Priscilla, for the invitation to learn more about the AAUW. I am impressed with all that you do and the impact on our local community.

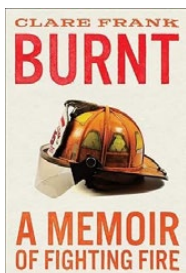
I was born and raised in California and attended college at Chico State, Sacramento State and Sierra Nevada College. I also spent a year of college in England where I picked up the "travel bug!" I have lived full time in Rubicon Bay for 36 years and truly enjoy the Tahoe lifestyle.

I worked as a Registered Dietitian in school, clinic and hospital settings for 20 years. After moving to Tahoe I decided to pursue a career in teaching and received my elementary credential from Sierra Nevada College. I taught for 25 years at both Kings Beach Elementary and Tahoe Lake Elementary, primarily at the kindergarten level. I retired from teaching two years ago.

I am loving retirement and the time it gives me to explore other interests!! My favorite activity is visiting my two new grandchildren and I find myself flying to Spokane and San Diego frequently. I also enjoy hiking, kayaking, snowshoeing, reading, cooking and traveling.

Thank you for welcoming me!

## PROGRAMS: SPECIAL COMBINED MEETING – GENERAL MEMBERSHIP + BOOK GROUP



### ***FIRE!***

Fire will be the subject discussed for our **November Book Group** which is also being opened up as a General Meeting for all members as well as spouses, partners and guests.

Clare Frank, author of "Burnt, A Memoir of Fighting Fire" will be the featured speaker.

Clare started firefighting in California at the age of seventeen and was promoted up the ranks to become the state's first and only female chief of fire protection. The book mixes irreverence and awe, taking readers inside fire houses, on daily calls, and along on gigantic wildfires where antics and dark humor balance terrifying risk, trauma, and a sense of almost holy responsibility. Clare lives near Lake Tahoe with her husband and a dog or two.

The book is available locally at Word after Word in Truckee or from these links:

<https://a.co/d/4tkDgsN> or

<https://bookshop.org/p/books/burnt-a-memoir-of-fighting-fire-clare-frank/18699323>

Clare will sign books at the event but is unable to sell her book there.

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, November 28th at 12 noon. The meeting will take place at Rosie's Cafe in Tahoe City.

Attendees have a choice of menu. Please select one of the following options:

- Italian meatball sandwich
- Turkey sandwich
- Portobello mushroom ravioli
- Chinese chicken salad
- Pear and walnut salad

You must pay for your lunch prior to attendance. Please send \$25 dollars using Zelle or paying by check.

To send \$25 to pay for the luncheon via Zelle, use our northtahoeaauw@gmail.com email address.

Or, please send a check made out to AAUW North Tahoe to PO Box 5612, Tahoe City, CA. 96145.

Space is limited to 40 people so please register early. You will not want to miss this outstanding speaker.

– **Barbara Ramsey & Cheryl Allen**



## SCHOLARSHIP

### 2021 STEM Scholarship Awardee Enters 3rd Year of Engineering Studies

**Mariana Bravo Corona**, a North Tahoe High School graduate and our 2021 NT AAUW STEM Scholarship awardee, recently drew on the 3rd installment of her \$5,000 4-year scholarship. Mariana just entered her 3rd year of study at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles

where she majors in Civil Engineering and made the Dean's List in Spring 2023. As her very thoughtful letter of thanks to NT AAUW below suggests, Mariana is an accomplished, articulate and very determined scholar. We should feel proud to support such young women who embark upon challenging STEM studies through continued donations to our STEM Scholarship Fund.

**Please see Mariana's Thank You letter below.**

*– Kathie Julian & Patricia Watters*

## MARIANA'S THANK YOU LETTER

Dear North Tahoe American Association of University Woman Scholarship,

As I reflect upon the journey that has brought me to the brink of my third year of undergraduate studies, it is nothing short of remarkable. The path I have traveled has been a challenging one, yet the blessings I've encountered along the way have far outweighed the obstacles. At this pivotal juncture, I am grateful for the opportunity to not only pursue my dreams but also to make a lasting impact on my community as an aspiring engineer. This is a journey characterized by perseverance and gratitude, significantly supported by the invaluable assistance of this scholarship, particularly as the cost of tuition continues to rise.

The story of my academic journey would be incomplete without acknowledging the pivotal role of scholarships, such as the one that has changed the trajectory of my life. Going into my third year of undergraduate studies, I can't help but marvel at the incredible opportunities that have come my way. This scholarship has been instrumental in making these opportunities accessible, proving that they are much more than just financial aid—they are a beacon of hope, a source of empowerment, and a catalyst for transformation.

For someone like me, hailing from a lower-income family living paycheck to paycheck, the rising cost of tuition was an insurmountable barrier to pursuing higher education. It was a time when I grappled with the disheartening notion that college might not be the path for me. However, the scholarship I received

shattered this misconception and, in doing so, illuminated the way forward. It provided the financial support I needed to continue my education and dream of becoming an engineer.

Each passing year brings not only new academic challenges but also an escalating financial burden. With tuition costs rising steadily, the weight of funding my education becomes heavier on my family's shoulders. The scholarship I have received has been a lifeline, not just for me, but for my family as well. It alleviates the economic strain and ensures that I can continue my education without the constant worry of overwhelming debt.

As I navigate the demanding landscape of a Civil Engineering major, I am keenly aware of the hardships I have faced and the hurdles I have surmounted. Nevertheless, these challenges have fortified my determination to persevere. I believe that my journey as a First Generation college student will serve as an inspiration for others, particularly in my community. My dream is to give back to my community by utilizing my skills and knowledge as an engineer to create positive change, to be a role model for those who, like me, face adversity and aspire to overcome it.

Once again, I thank you immensely for the support with this scholarship!

Best,

*Mariana Bravo*





**What a great new venue at the NT High School Theater for our annual talks from Girls State and Tech Trek campers.** The seats were comfortable, the setting was ceremonial and the parking was abundant. Use of the theater was free.

We applied for, and were granted, a Group 1 classification from Tahoe Truckee Unified School District to use TTUSD facilities free of charge, as AAUW North Tahoe is now recognized as a longstanding and committed partner to our students, programs and community.

Holding our presentations at the NTHS Auditorium is a step forward in promoting our programs (TTUSD uses Theater interchangeably, the sign on the HS building says Auditorium). Our presentation at the Auditorium allowed NT School Principal Chad Lindeen to attend for the first time after many invitations, to hear our five Tech Trekkers from his middle school.

In attendance also was rock-solid Tech Trek supporter 7th grade science teacher Julia Anderson. NTHS Principal Joanna Mitchell regretted being pulled away to supervise the homecoming varsity soccer game. HS Counselor Jeff Reams who coordinates with our Girls State program was also called away for family. We may look forward to more inclusion with TTUSD staff.

Thanks to our members who attended, including former TT coordinator Shirley Hale, and husband Don who is a strong supporter of TT with the Rotary Club of Tahoe City; and Maria Snideman who has agreed to help with Tech Trek.

Thanks also to parents who attended: Carlie and Serge Balint, parents of Ava, Guillermo and Gabriela Carrasco parents of Leilani, (plus her aunt), and Maria Estrada-Lopez, mother of Arely Calderon our Girls State rep. This year former Virtual trekker Vallerie Laguna introduced our 2023 speakers. Vallerie’s mother Edith Martinez was in attendance and visited with former colleagues from Kings Beach Elementary School. Thank you family members!

Trekker’s who spoke were: Ava Balint, Leilani Carrasco, Dana Valdez and Ximena Trinidad Castellanos; thank you for using cue cards : ). Aleyda Alférez Ibarra missed the presentations to attend an appointment with her mother that day and has agreed to lead our ceremony next year. Thank you 2023 campers!

Last and not least, thank you Johnnie Lee for the well loved popsicles!

– *Meri McEneny*



Our wonderful Girls State candidate, Arely Calderon, told us about her experiences at camp this past June/July. She had a terrific time and made many friends and will take what she learned forward with her. She is in the process of applying to six universities, some in CA and some out of state, some public and some private. She is really on top of her applications and we wish her the very best, knowing she will do well wherever she goes.

– *Christine Madden & Linda Larish*

More photos of the event on the next page!



*Priscilla Mills, Meri McEneny and the Tech Trek / Girls State participants at the NTHS Auditorium*

**PHOTOS: Annual Talks from Tech Trek and Girls State Campers at the North Tahoe High School Theater**



*Leilani Carrasco (Tech Trek)*



*Ava Balint (Tech Trek)*



*Dana Valdez (Tech Trek)*



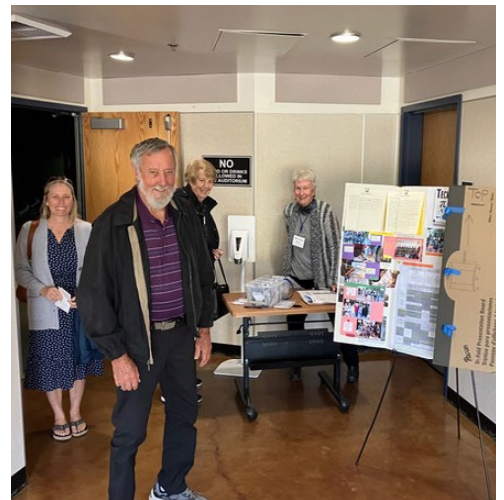
*Ximena Trinidad Castellanos (Tech Trek)*



*Vallerie Laguna  
(former Tech Trekker)*



*L to R: Linda Larish (Girls State Officer)  
and Arely Calderon (Girls State Candidate)*



*L to R: Maria Snideman, Don Hale, Shirley Hale,  
Johnnie Lee Don*



*Meri McEneny  
(Tech Trek Coordinator)*

**[CLICK HERE](#)  
to watch a video  
of the event**



## CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

**NOTE: Ursula Heffernon** - Thank you for your very generous donation to scholarship.

– *Linda Larish*



*Very best wishes to our  
November Birthdays!*

**07 – Martha Russell**

**09 – Nancy Cline**

**10 – Amy Horne**

**15 – Julie Elmen**

**16 – Janet Potter**

**18 – Meri McEneny**

## INTEREST GROUPS



### **BRIDGE**

On Monday, November 6th, at 2 PM, Kym Pipkin, Patricia Watters, Betsey Husted and Sharon Ekin are scheduled to play bridge on the online Trickster program. This program has a video function which allows us to “see” each other. The first Monday of each month is being offered to bridge players. A second opportunity of the following Wednesday is also offered for those who cannot play on Monday. Anyone wishing to play bridge with us on this program can simply contact Betsey Husted: [betseyhusted18@gmail.com](mailto:betseyhusted18@gmail.com), or 702-499-4332.

– *Betsey Husted*



## **CULINARY CAPERS**

Ten of us enjoyed a wonderful afternoon, celebrating our beautiful autumn season and our friendships at Pat Castellucci's lovely home. It was beautifully decorated as always and we had delicious appetizers and holiday drinks (apple cider and hot cinnamon cider). We were especially glad that two of our new members joined us. Thank you for coming Gay Thomas and Judy Brown. It was nice to be able to visit with them. We were also joined by one of Pat's dear friends, Carol. We each shared our favorite kitchen tool and it was fun to see what everyone loved to use in their kitchens. Shirley Cabo's jar opener was a hit and opened a jar of Pat's that she had been unable to open.

**Our next CC event will be in January** and will be a celebration of winter at Johnnie Lee's home. We will have fondue and warm drinks. Date to be determined but hope you will join us.

– *Linda Larish & Johnnie Lee Don*



*Culinary Capers Group Photo*



*Culinary Capers: Jo Ann Cobb and Pat Castellucci*



*Culinary Capers: Delicious Food and Fun Decorations*

The next meeting will be held on November 15th at Esther Sonnenberg's home at 2:00 PM. We welcome stitchers of any ability levels to come to our meetings. At our meetings we work on individual projects as well as on group-projects.

Please contact either Julie Elmen or Esther Sonnenberg with any questions.

Julie Elmen: [jdelen@gmail.com](mailto:jdelen@gmail.com)

Esther Sonneberg:  
[esther.sonnenberg@gmail.com](mailto:esther.sonnenberg@gmail.com)

– *Julie Elmen & Esther Sonnenberg*



## **GREAT DECISIONS**

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday we have changed the date of our next Great Decisions meeting from November 21st to the week before on Tuesday November 14th at 10am at the Tahoe Yacht Club. A zoom meeting will also be available for those who can not come in person. Priscilla Mills will be our moderator for Chapter 8 which is titled "Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Migration." An email reminder will be sent out the week before with the zoom information. This is our last meeting for the year so please bring your calendars to sign up to moderate for next year. Our new books will be delivered in early January and we will keep you posted on our next meeting.

– *Ann Lyman*



## **IN STITCHES**

In Stitches group members gathered at Julie Elmen's home to knit, crochet and sew and to share in delicious snacks prepared by our gracious hostess. Esther Sonnenberg sewed our AAUW label onto our group- blanket project which has since been donated to **Project Linus** (to support traumatized youth). Our latest group-blanket will also be going to Project Linus when completed. At our next meeting we will discuss any future donation projects.



## **WALKING GROUP**

The October snow flurry should remind you to dig out your snow shoes and get ready for winter. We may be able to make tracks in December if not sooner.

If you have any favorite snowshoe places—Chickadee Ridge? Knock-Your-Socks-Off Rock? Incline Lake?—let Dianne Lange know so she can start checking out trails.

The November Walk location is uncertain, so let Dianne know your suggestions. Maybe something in the Donner Tahoe area?

– *Dianne Lange*



## **CALENDAR**

### **NOVEMBER**

- 06:** Bridge (Online Trickster)
- 09:** Leadership Meeting (Zoom)
- 14:** Great Decisions
- 15:** InStitches
- 27:** Walking Group
- 28:** Book Group & General Meeting