



# THE SAGE HEN

## A Quarterly Publication of the AAUW Nevada State Council

### 2023 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter



Mission Statement: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

#### President's Message:

#### HAPPY SUMMER AAUW NV!

Hope you are enjoying the Summer weather – AND staying cool! It was a very long Winter and somewhat short Spring – and now some over-the-top heat! I am hoping this is not “the new normal.” Personally, I prefer the former style with definable seasons and expectations. Maybe this is Mother Nature’s way of telling us to adapt or be flexible??

#### AAUW NV 2022-2023 FISCAL YEAR GOALS ACHIEVED!

On April 22, 2023, AAUW members in Nevada definitely “Got IN the Mood!” Our conference speakers and panelists Inspired and Informed us with Innovative ideas. Ms. Michelle Joy, President and CEO of Carson Tahoe Health and Ms. Marissa Castillo, Executive Director of Miss Silver State Pageant highlighted the importance of inclusion and diversity in their very different workplaces. Our outstanding panelists focused on the never-ending fight to protect women’s reproductive rights. Kudos to AAUW Las Vegas for co-hosting the event and sharing highlights of their Branch’s rich history and ongoing activities.

AAUW NV celebrated Equality Day on August 26<sup>th</sup>, A statewide Zoom meeting shared pro and con information about the statewide propositions on the November ballot. AAUW NV also collaborated with Capital Branch AAUW on February 24, 2023 for a statewide Zoom session about the use of gender pronouns. Regular AAUW NV Council meetings are held via Zoom, allowing members to attend without travel concerns. Branch presidents are encouraged to attend these meetings. AAUW NV's Sage Hen Newsletter provides information about AAUW NV activities and programs and encourages Branches to share their information, as well.

#### AAUW NV 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The AAUW NV Council met on July 20<sup>th</sup> and approved both a Strategic Plan, with minor wording changes, and a budget for the 2023-24 Fiscal Year.

AAUW NV will hold a State Convention in 2024! Jennifer Verive, our Program chair, is exploring possibilities for dynamic and interesting speakers and presenters! **If YOU have a suggestion, please send to Jennifer at [jmverive@gmail.com](mailto:jmverive@gmail.com).** The business portion will include

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| President's Message       | 1-2  |
| State Council Information | 2    |
| Branch News               | 3-10 |
| Little Shop of Horrors    | 11   |

(Continued on Page 2)



**President's Message:** (Continued from Page 1)

an election of a new AAUW NV Executive Council. According to our Bylaws, a minimum of 5 members will be elected. A maximum of 9 can be elected. **You are encouraged to step up and be part of the AAUW NV Council. For more info - contact me at [cpunches206@gmail.com](mailto:cpunches206@gmail.com).**

Thanks for your continued support of AAUW NV!  
Caroline Punches,  
President



**2022-2024 AAUW State Council Information**

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| E | President         | Caroline Punches | <a href="mailto:Cpunches206@charter.net">Cpunches206@charter.net</a> | 775-246-1850<br>775-443-8318  | Capital   |
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| E | Secretary         | Helene Winkler   | <a href="mailto:hipwinkler@yahoo.com">hipwinkler@yahoo.com</a>       | 702-916-4663,<br>310-998-7969 | Las Vegas |
| E | Program/DEI       | Jennifer Verive  | <a href="mailto:jmverive@gmail.com">jmverive@gmail.com</a>           | 775-315-4748                  | Capital   |
| E | Public Policy     | Debbie Nicholas  | <a href="mailto:Nicholas89451@gmail.com">Nicholas89451@gmail.com</a> | 775-843-0775                  | Tahoe     |
| E | Newsletter        | Millie Szerman   | <a href="mailto:MillieSz746@gmail.com">MillieSz746@gmail.com</a>     | 775-833-3311                  | Tahoe     |
| E | Membership        | Marian Stanton   | <a href="mailto:mikistanto@aol.com">mikistanto@aol.com</a>           | 702-263-1028                  | Las Vegas |
| E | At Large          | Janet Usinger    | <a href="mailto:usingerj@unr.edu">usingerj@unr.edu</a>               | 775-831-0343<br>775-240-1004  | Tahoe     |
|   | Past President    | Janice Flanagan  | <a href="mailto:janflangan@aol.com">janflangan@aol.com</a>           | 775-828-1993                  | Reno      |
| E | Communications    | Doris Dowden     | <a href="mailto:Dquared2@sbcglobal.net">Dsquared2@sbcglobal.net</a>  | 775-827-2481<br>775-750-1560  | Reno      |



### *From the Boulder City Branch:*

Boulder City AAUW just awarded three scholarships to women living in Boulder City or Henderson who are working towards a college degree at Nevada State College for 2023 Fall or Summer terms. Scholarships were funded from their April 22 Wine and Chocolate Event at the Boulder City Hotel through this community's support and attendance. AAUW has funded all or part of educations of countless women so they could follow their dreams. From astronauts to zoologists, the recipients of AAUW's fellowships, grants and awards represent nearly every imaginable field of endeavor.

Congratulations to our 2023 Summer or Fall scholarship recipients with Kathi Dew, Scholarship Committee Chair on the far left with recipients from left to right **Karina Grafton, Carly Conrad, and Briana Santana.**



**Conrad** is in the College of Nursing, working with children as a pediatric nurse and eventually becoming a nursing educator. "Children are our future," she says, "and promoting kindness and education by example are the best ways to improve the community."

**Grafton** is a Speech-Language pathology (SLP) major with a minor in Deaf studies. "Working as an SLP," says Grafton, "is a tremendous opportunity to help others regain, refine, or relearn ability to communicate with their families and the world."

**Santana** studies Nursing. With a degree in Psychology and after becoming an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), it created a turning point for her to become a registered nurse. "The EMT position exposed me to my community in ways that made me learn, not only about the beauty of medicine, but the challenges in healthcare faced in our community," Santana states.

Boulder City's AAUW will offer scholarships for the 2024 Winter semester from funds earned at the Fall Wine and Chocolate Event and the November Home Tour. It takes a village to build the future!

### *From the Capital Branch:*

The achievements of our Branch this year are the result of a committed Executive Board and a dedicated membership whose values support the goals of our organization. During the 2022 – 2023 year, our Branch goals, objectives, and action plans have guided our work.

Our Board met regularly throughout the year, beginning in July, when our goals, objectives and action plans were reviewed and updated. At the September 2022 meeting, these new goals were reviewed, and members voted to adopt them for the new term.

**Membership:** Our membership Vice Presidents Sharon Orgain and Rita Osborne produced an annual survey of member opinions and kept us well informed through newsletter articles (thanks to editor, Cindy White), periodic emails, name tags with new lanyards, and welcomed and counted attendance at each meeting.

**Interest Groups:** Cathy Haber and her Interest Group kept the membership engaged through various groups and informal lunches.

(Continued on Page 4)



*From the Capital Branch (continued):*

**Executive Board:** Our Board met quarterly again this year in July, October, January, and April. In the July meeting, Board members reviewed and updated our Branch Goals, Objectives, and Action Plans. These were reviewed and adopted by our members in September. In October, January and April, the Board oversaw fund-raising plans and efforts; further implementation of the goals of an active Allyship Program; appointment of our new DEI coordinator (Katy Steinle); and how to keep members better apprised of members' individual issues (illnesses, family deaths, milestones). The Board addressed the 2023-24 Budget and the awarding of our Scholarships in May 2023.

**Program Offerings:** Our Program Vice Presidents, Diane Koditek and Iris Blasdel provided excellent opportunities for learning about a variety of topics, including National and State AAUW policies; supporting political depolarization; water issues in the Carson Valley; mental health; and updates on the 2023 Legislative session. Our programs offered a ZOOM option.

Our final meeting of the year in May honored our Scholarship recipients.

**Public Policy:** In addition to providing excellent presentations on the many political issues in today's environment, Beth Mancl and JoAnn Carpenter provided leadership in engaging our members in understanding details about local, statewide, and national policies relevant to AAUW issues.

**Philanthropy:** We raised funds through our annual Pecan Sales, thanks to Kathy Steinle and Shirley Hammon. Our traditional Feast of Chocolate was once again turned into a successful *virtual, calorie-free* fundraising campaign this year due to the lingering Covid 19 epidemic.

Our Branch owes a debt of gratitude to our Treasurer, Betsy Strohl. She expertly managed our funds making sure income was added into account, and disbursements for various donations and scholarships were properly executed. We appreciate the regular updates and responses to members' questions. Our thanks to her for developing our future budget which was adopted by the Board and approved by the members in May and, of course, agreeing to remain as our Treasurer for the next term. Thank you!

**Community Collaboration:** Kathy Steinle has accepted the role of DEI Coordinator and is developing plans for 2023-24 to coordinate with our Allyship program.

It is note-worthy that the League of Women Voters is back in Northern Nevada and joined with Sierra Nevada Forums and Capital Branch to present Candidate Forums last Fall. We have had representation on the Nevada Coalition for Women's Equity. Our connection with Western Nevada College has grown stronger as we have been meeting there for two wonderful years. We continue to be grateful for allowing us to use their classroom for our meetings.

The relationship with Envirolutions has been a wonderful opportunity for us to put into action our desire to assist young girls in pursuit of their goals related to STEM education. Thanks to Barbara Kuehner and her committee for their leadership in this important endeavor.

A fuller version of this report is available to any who wish to receive it. Contact Branch President, Patricia Cuocco ([patricia@fullerton.edu](mailto:patricia@fullerton.edu)) for a copy.





***From the Fallon Branch:***

SEPTEMBER – Our membership Pot Luck Lunch was held in the AG building at the Churchill County Fairgrounds, and our guest speaker was Caroline Panches, AAUW Nevada state president. We had a wonderful visit and learned of the latest activities planned at state level.

OCTOBER – We had a very interesting visit with Summer Stevens, Superintendent of Churchill County School District and were very impressed with all the many activities and classes now available for our students.

NOVEMBER – The County has built a huge indoor arena, Rafters C3, at the fairgrounds. It is spectacular. We enjoyed a great tour of the facility and look forward to attending one of the many events planned.

DECEMBER – Thanks to many of our members who are candy makers we had a very successful Candy Sale at the Senior Center. This is an annual event and is our first fundraiser of the year.

JANUARY – Our New Year's Soup-Salad-Dessert pot luck and white elephant sale was held in the Fireside Room of Epworth United Methodist Church. (It is getting harder to find available areas for meetings in Fallon). We had some guests and lots of friendly interaction with members. A general discussion was held as to what movie to select for our Film Festival, which brought back a lot of memories for our members as we show older movies.

FEBRUARY – Our Film Festival choice ended up as *French Kiss*. It was a fun movie and enjoyed by everyone. We also had a table of snacks provided by local restaurants and supporters and we supply Irish coffee. Some of the leftover goodies end up at the Fallon Youth Club. This is our biggest fundraiser and is the main source for our Scholarship Fund.

MARCH – This is our International Program and we were very fortunate to have a young Hispanic woman who has been in DACA for many years. She spoke of all the problems she has faced and yet has attained a college degree. We were also treated to some young Hispanic dancers and then enjoyed a variety of delicious foods.

APRIL – This month we honor our Scholarship recipients, and this year were able to honor four high school girls with \$1,000 each. Our luncheon for them was held at Lattin Farms. A family member or a guest are also invited to attend. At that time, we also honor a Branch Woman of the Year and a Community Woman of the Year.

MAY – May is our last meeting of the year and this year we were treated to a tour of the Oat's Park Arts Center. It is the old Oat's Park School and had many impressive collections. It was a wonderful tour and enjoyed by all who attended. Sadly, all the permanent items were removed by the last Director (it was in the news). The wonderful people in our town have loaned a spectacular number of their own art to fill the empty spaces. In addition, we added three new members to our roster for the upcoming year!



### ***From the Las Vegas Branch:***

Shirley Hills and Judy Ingham want to thank everyone for a wonderful biennium. We had engaging speakers and were actively involved with retaining, reinstating, and building our membership.

Las Vegas Branch members and guests have been very generous in their donations to the Scholarship Fund. We are hoping to give six \$1,000 scholarships for this coming year. Our interest groups have been busy building relationships and inviting guests to join us in our outings, in our book club, and bridge marathon fundraisers. We will continue to reach out to the Boulder City Branch, so that we can support each other in our AAUW mission, goals, and vision. This Fall, we hope to meet the AAUW Branch members from St. George, UT!

Our June meeting, the last one of the season, was quite dynamic. Two of our scholarship recipients, from Nevada State College, spoke about their accomplishments in the field of nursing. They shared how the AAUW scholarships, mentoring, and support have impacted their lives. Our guest speaker, Traci Callahan, a professional volleyball player and coach, gave us her view on how sports can enrich a woman's life and be a confidence builder. Traci is hoping to attend UNLV medical school this Fall. Then, Jennifer Wells, Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada Community Engagement Facilitator, spoke at our meeting. She was there to pick up donations that were collected during our April, May, and June meetings. Members donated items for Girl Scout Summer Camp. Jennifer said that many of the girls don't have the basic necessities needed for an overnight camping experience. She thanked us for our ongoing community outreach. Finally, we installed our new officers: Co-Presidents Janis Schoen and Marilyn Zimmerman, Vice President of Membership Shirley Hills, and Treasurer Letti Dowell. Congratulations to our new Board members for the 2023-2025 biennium!

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, we will host an Ice Cream Social, at Cam Usher's home. We would love to have you—join us. It will be from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. For more details, contact Cam Usher, at (702) 458-1747.

We hope you have a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you at our Las Vegas Branch meetings in the Fall!



**Janis Schoen (New Co-President)** has been a member of AAUW since 2021. She has lived in Las Vegas permanently since 2019. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Adelphi University, located in Garden City, NY and Masters of Library Science from St. John's University, located in Queens, NY, where she worked as a graduate assistant to the head of the Library Science Department. She was a late "bloomer" and only started college at the age of 40. Better late than never! Her interests are varied: quilting, reading, political action, and women's issues top the list. Her latest adventure took her to Australia and New Zealand. Perhaps next year you will find her on an African Safari!

**Marilyn Zimmerman (New Co-President)** has been a member of AAUW since 1993. She served as Branch President in Grand Junction, Colorado for four years and as Colorado State President for two years. The last four years she has been the Treasurer for AAUW Las Vegas Branch. Marilyn has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Carthage College in Kenosha, WI, and a Certificate in Non-Profit Management from Case Western Reserve University. Marilyn spent her career in non-profit management, working for the Girl Scouts in various locations including Waukegan, IL; Joliet, IL; Pomona, CA; Grand Junction, CO; Baton Rouge, LA; and Heidelberg, Germany for close to 30 years.



(Continued on Page 7)



*From the Las Vegas Branch (continued):*

**Happy Summer 2023!**

I hope you all enjoyed the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. As summer progresses, I invite you to consider how public policy touches every area of our lives. Nevada's busy legislative session came to an end in June, but much work is still left to be done. For example, Reproductive Health Senate Bill 131 was signed into law by Governor Lombardo in May 2023. The resolution passed the Senate 13-8 on April 17 and the Assembly 28-14 on May 10. Both votes were on strict party lines. And, according to the Nevada Current, "SJR 7 will return to the legislature in 2025 for a second approval. If lawmakers pass it again, it will appear before voters to decide during the 2026 general election." Go to <https://www.nevadacurrent.com/2023/05/23/nevada-bill-to-protect-abortion-patients-from-prosecution-elsewhere-heads-to-governors-desk/> for details. There is still a lot to do.

**AAUW Washington, DC**

I recently visited AAUW National in Washington, DC, and met with Meghan Kissell, MSW, the Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy. Meghan gave me a tour of AAUW's beautiful offices, shared AAUW's rich history and introduced me to some of the amazing women working on our behalf!



*Meghan Kissell, MSW, Senior Director, Policy & Member Advocacy and Evelyn Thompson Hilbert, Doctor of Public Policy Candidate, Public Policy Chair-AAUW Las Vegas Chapter at AAUW headquarters in Washington, DC.*

(Continued on Page 8)





***From the Las Vegas Branch (continued):***

We discussed the compliments and concerns from those of you who shared with me before I left for my trip. Meghan and the entire team are working hard to help facilitate the needs and desires of over 500 AAUW chapters. She shared how unique each chapter is and how important each one is to our united AAUW missions. The rich history from the 1800s through the challenges we face today demonstrates why AAUW is so important and integral not just women's rights, but those of all Americans.

As America's political landscape changes, progresses and regresses, women continue the lead the charge for equal access to all the benefits and privileges our constitution guarantees! Contact me at [ethilbert1@gmail.com](mailto:ethilbert1@gmail.com) with any questions or public policy suggestions. - Cheers, Evelyn!



AAUW Collage



AAUW members at signing of Equal Pay Act by President John F. Kennedy, June 10, 1963



Donated AAUW Teapot

(Continued on Page 9)





### ***From the Reno Branch:***

**Membership:** The year's Branch membership comprises 49 National/Reno, 6 Lifetime, 9 Honorary Lifetime, and 1 Graduate Student, for a total of 65.

**President's Report:** Courtenay Burns

Currently, the Branch does not have an elected president. It is facing a dwindling, limited leadership engagement, and aging membership. At the upcoming council retreat, there will be discussion on but not limited to: 1) vacancies of leadership positions, 2) resistance to diverse and younger populations, 3) relevant program venues to reach out to college students, and 4) strategies to identify competing organizations and to advance transformation of the Branch for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Secretary's Report:** Joanne Walen

Minutes recorded for leadership council meetings from August 2022 to June 2023 and April's business meeting are stored in the Branch's Dropbox. The secretary set up and maintained a chart of actionable items passed at Council meetings beginning in 2021. She also maintained the records of orders and delivery of vests as a Branch fundraiser.

**Programs:** Sara Vélez Mallea

The DEI committee (comprised of 5 individuals) managed 7 Zoom speakers for the general meetings. The average participation was 25% of the total Branch. MailChimp was the primary vehicle to announce all Branch activities. It's fair to speculate that we delivered information to most of the membership because of the high rate of email opening—73%. The programs were on: Latinos of Nevada by UNLV Assoc. Dean and Prof. John P. Tuman; the colonial dehumanization of Indigenous People by Numu Prof. Debra Harry from UNR's Dept. of Gender, Race, and Identity (GRI); gender and race issues of the 1960s–1970s that propelled the Women's, Civil Rights, and LGBTQ Rights Movements by Prof. Lydia Huerta Moreno from UNR's GRI Dept.; culturally responsive practices in educating students and in training teachers by UNR College of Education and Human Development Dean and Prof. Dr. Donald Easton-Brooks; global reproductive rights in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by Prof. Prisca Gayles from UNR's GRI Dept.; US elections and civics education by Prof. Sondra Cosgrove from the College of Southern Nevada and Vote Nevada; and generational change through education and scholarships in the Philippines by Ms. Gina Cowell (Philippine born and raised, retired Director of Civil Rights and Affirmative Action at the Department of Health in Madison), and Certified Iyengar Yoga Teacher. To add educational value prior to the program meetings, 4 documentary films were recommended for viewing.

**Newsletter Report:** Sara Vélez Mallea

The newsletter was revamped to encourage a more thorough exploration of topics. MailChimp newsletters remain the most effective way to reach the membership and to promote retention.

**Communications:** Doris Dowden

- As Membership Directory Publisher: uploaded data to the Branch website in the “members only” (password required) section
- As Branch Website Administrator: kept information current on leadership information, program meetings, council initiatives, and Branch newsletters uploading
- As Email Manager: composed and sent 25 reminders on Branch news and activities to members and allies

(Continued on Page 10)



***From the Reno Branch: Continued***

- Ensured current member information is held on the AAUW Community Hub; in 2022–2023, the list manager made approximately 15 downloads/uploads

***Special Interests:*** The Branch has 5 groups coordinated by members, and some are more active than others: Book (Cam Sutherland), Bridge (Carolyn Stone), Great Decisions (Cam Sutherland), Mindfulness (Robbyn Tolles), and Walking (Byllie Andrews and Jessica McDonald).

***From the Tahoe-Nevada Branch:***

AAUW Tahoe Nevada had a busy 2022-2023 year. Our Interest Groups have completely rebounded from the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our long Winter provided plenty of opportunity for the Outdoor Enthusiasts to snowshoe; they are now feasting their eyes on the abundant wildflowers as they hike in the mountains. The high lake level is particularly appreciated as the Outdoor Enthusiasts kayak our clear blue lake. Now that it is over, we can appreciate the brutal Winter we had!!!

Great Decisions modified their format to include both weekly and monthly discussions of important global issues. The Cinemaddicts got out of the house during our long Winter to enjoy some of the latest films. The Book Club read some fascinating books and the Cooking Club enjoyed some great meals. We reinstated the Travel Club - AAUW members traveled both near and far, including a walking tour in the Cotswold in England.

Our monthly meetings featured a wide variety of topics. A few of our members lived in Incline Village at its beginnings in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the AAUW member panel shared stories of those early days so newcomers could better understand Incline Village today (if that is possible!). Likewise, a guided tour of the Thunderbird Lodge focused on the original owner, George Whittell. We also received an update on current efforts to create a City of Incline Village – what a process! We learned some of the details of the University of Nevada, Reno's (UNR) acquisition of Sierra Nevada University, as well as plans for the future of the campus.

Some of our own members were featured speakers, as well. 2023-2024 Co-President-Elect, Barbara Ortiz talked about navigating the highest levels of the military as a woman. Christine Silk, an author in her own right, explained the value of writing personal memoirs to preserve family history. We also Raised our Creativity Through Art.

Over the past several years, our fundraising has been extremely successful. Last summer, our Garden Party and Silent Auction added approximately \$20,000 to other fundraising efforts. This allowed us to expand our scholarships to include Community Education Grants. In 2022-2023, we provided funding for middle school students who would be the first in their families to attend college to participate in Dean's Future Scholars, a college readiness program run by UNR. We also supported Incline Elementary School Math and Reading Intervention, Incline Middle School Culinary Club, Incline High School Engineering Program, Girls on the Run Summer Camp, and the Incline Village Library's Hydroponic Garden.

The new Community Education Grants are in addition to supporting four new Incline High School graduates, two who will attend Willamette University and two who will attend UNR. We continue to support students as they continue their postsecondary educations at Washington State University, UCLA, University of Miami, and UNR.