



Fall Forum 2024



by Marge Whitman, Program Co-Vice President

On Saturday, November 10, the State AAUW held its annual Fall Forum in Tucson

... with 60 individuals representing all Arizona Branches.

The atmosphere at the AAUW Fall Forum was warm, friendly, and perhaps even optimistic! Thanks to the many who traveled to Tucson for the event. Members in the Tucson and Green Valley branches must tire of traveling to Phoenix for most AAUW events; their attendance and participation evidenced their pleasure to have a local event!

The day started with a **Welcome from Arizona State President, Becky Gunn**, with some remarks relating to how the election may affect issues we as AAUW members care about. The message encouraged all to continue to hope and know that we will be empowered to advocate for our issues in the future. Becky also ran a short Business meeting. There is another article in this newsletter dealing with the results of the meeting. *(Please see Page 5.)*

Tucson and Green Valley hosted us very well! It was a remarkable program that involved ongoing interaction between guest presenters and members. We recalled our values formation among women at our tables of 8. It was quite humbling to hear the awesome stories each person shared as they recalled the origin of their values and the sacrifices made by those who mentored them. There was no lecture. *(Continued on Page 4.)*

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Empowering Women Since 1881

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President's Pen

Becky's Musings



When you read this message, you will either be elated, just okay, or devastated. This Fall has been overwhelming for many of us. We care so much about the issues. We care about our country. And, we have participated in our democracy. We have done what we could do. Pat yourselves on your back and know that your voice had an impact.

I am saying this to myself as much as I am saying it to you. Obviously, we will not have won all of the battles, but we have accomplished much. We cannot fall prey to negating our efforts.

I love the members of our state organization. How can I say that? I don't know many of you. But what I know is that the women who belong to AAUW hold extremely high values, live those values, support other members through adversity, and empower each other through community. You are fabulous women. Some of us are older and can't do quite as much as we used to, but we are still there when needed. Some of you are so energetic and committed that we hold you in awe. But every time I visit a Branch or go to a Forum, I meet women who are models for leadership, for caring, for getting things done. I absolutely feel the best part of my job as State President is meeting and speaking with members.

I think of this organization as one which chooses issues, develops strategies to address those issues, and empowers women to initiate those strategies. What gives us the energy to do this? Our Branch communities. It is each of you doing your part, being committed, but listening, and holding each other in the process through community.

Thank you for being the fabulous women you are. Take a bow and know you are appreciated.

Becky Gunn, President



Fall Forum 2024 (Continued from page 1)

Ana Nygren started each session introducing our guests with questions about their background and choices they had made.

Melissa LaDuke, a member of the AAUW National Team for DEI and the National Board, shared her personal history as a twenty-year military member and answered questions about AAUW nationally. One sad statistic she shared is the AVERAGE age of AAUW members is now 76 years. And membership continues to decline. Arizona State AAUW is solely dependent on a small portion of membership dues; these are less each year as our membership declines which seriously lessens the amount of grants and projects AAUW Arizona can support.

Magdalena Verdugo, our second guest, is serving as CEO of the Southern Arizona YWCA—a very active organization that supports women, especially Latina women. She is from Mexico and values relationships with those with whom she works and in the community.

Next, led by **Linda Alepin**, author of the book we received [Shifting Contexts](#), we discussed in our table groups ideas such as which well-known leader would we like to lunch with and what books we read in our youth that influenced our values. We did a one-to-one listening exercise then identified the purpose of our listening: curiosity, understanding, and/or heartfelt concern.

It was clear that everyone found the meeting energizing and motivational.

Thanks go to all the participants and particularly the organizing committee for the Event.



Thank You!

Fall Forum Committee Members

Linda Alepin	Susie Jennings
Beverly Byrd	Ana Nygren
Betsy Flaten	Amy Perlick
Becky Gunn	Karen Ramos
Marge Haberman	Marge Whitman
Sandy Williamson	



Business Meeting Summary November 9, 2024



by **Becky Gunn, President**

A Business Meeting was called to order by Arizona State President Becky Gunn at the Fall Forum event held in Tucson, Arizona. Three amendments to State Bylaws were **considered**. The requirement for a voting quorum was met by having six of the seven Branches being present. All present who are members of Branches in the State of Arizona were able to vote with the exception of the convener of the Business Meeting.

- ✚ **Amendment 1** was passed with a plurality of those attending. This amendment changes the term of the President to one year and adds the position of Past President in an advisory role.
- ✚ **Amendment 2** was passed with a plurality of those attending. This amendment provides for the election of the Public Policy Director(s) for two-year terms, which means they will also be on the Executive Committee.
- ✚ **Amendment 3** was passed unanimously. This amendment provides for the creation of the position of Treasurer Elect to be elected in the second year of the current treasurer's term.

Each of the amendments was thought to be helpful for the effectiveness of the State Board.

-----**Taken from AAUW.ORG**-----

Fundraise through your branch

We appreciate every day and dollar that our members spend fighting on behalf of women. Giving to our Greatest Needs Fund helps us use your donation where it's needed the most.

Become a Champion

The AAUW Champions for Women and Girls program recognizes individuals who have made a significant financial commitment to advancing equity for women and girls. It honors those who donate \$5,000 or more to AAUW each year.

Leave a Legacy

Making a planned gift to AAUW is an easy way to make a real impact and leave an enduring legacy that will benefit AAUW long into the future. Planned gifts — or bequests — are gifts that you designate in your will, estate or trust.



Public Policy

by Betsy Flaten and Beverly Byrd
AAUW Arizona Public Policy Co-Chairs

We are lucky to be living in a country that selects its' leaders through fair elections. We have the opportunity for our voices to be heard - as women voters. However, the November election results may have brought a sense of uncertainty and a genuine concern for what lies ahead in our lives.

It is important to remember that we are not defined by one leader or administration. We are defined by our shared vision and priorities and have the clarity of knowing our values, which is our strength.

As a non-partisan organization, we can make an impact by supporting the propositions, bills, and amendments that impact us and align with our AAUW priorities. Our voices were heard with the passing of Proposition 139 - Arizona's Abortion Access Act, which will amend Article II of the Arizona State Constitution. Across the country, 6 other states also approved propositions that impact our reproductive rights as women.

So, what's ahead in 2025. AAUW National will update our 2025-2027 national priorities, but the basic priorities remain the same. These are the priorities upon which we structured the 2024-2026 Public Policy Plan.

Now that Proposition 139 passed and is part of the state constitution and with the incoming change in the administration in Washington, we need to explore our opportunities moving forward at the National and state level. This is what we hope to bring to the Spring Forum.

AAUW Arizona members will be armed with the information and structure to continue championing for women's rights - education, equity and leadership. With women's equity rights being challenged on many levels, particularly education, we hope to provide a roadmap of opportunities and actions you can utilize to prevent further equity erosion.

While our leaders change, our priorities do not change. We may experience challenges from unexpected sources, but by focusing on our goals, we can continue to achieve milestones. Today, we continue to do what we have done all along - advocate for equity, women's rights and leadership.



Green Valley

by Nancy Puckett, Co-President

The elections may be over, but the work is not. Public policy is the cornerstone of AAUW's mission, and the Green Valley Branch is pleased to introduce its 2 co-chairs for Public Policy—Marilyn Kern and Judy Thup.

They will be working with the Arizona State Public Policy chairs to keep us up-to-date about issues, events, and policies relevant to our mission and goals. Their leadership in this area will be a great asset to our branch. The Green Valley Branch this year is off to a strong start with 2 excellent programs.

In September Rob Peters, Executive Director of the nonprofit organization Save the Scenic Santa Rita Mountains, delivered an insightful talk on the potential implications and dangers of the Highbay Mining project underway in our nearby mountains. With some permits still pending, he also outlined ways for residents to communicate their opinions to elected officials.

In October, Roxana Rico-Beaucage, Superintendent Green Valley Continental School gave an impressive presentation on today's Challenges in Public Education. She outlined nation-wide problems, including, among others, the significant gaps in funding between wealthy and low-income

school districts, teacher shortages, and insufficient mental health support for students.

She listed efforts to address such problems, describing the progress she has achieved at Continental and the challenges going forward. Her talk was timely as Green Valley's November ballot included a referendum to provide a 1% increase to the state override funding for Continental School's budget.

Roxana expressed appreciation for the GV Branch endorsement of the proposition, supporting a "yes" vote.

Our branch has supported Continental School in other ways.

- ✚ We provided Chrome computers for early-grade students 5 years ago.
- ✚ Last year launched a program, Keeping Our Girls in School, which includes Continental.

This program provides hygiene products to girls who cannot afford them and so risk missing school. The school's mascot is the colt, and Roxanna's presentation ended with a slide stating:

"The Colt Family is extremely grateful for the support of our AAUW Green Valley Chapter." Many members left thanking Roxana for her excellence in education! *(Continued on Page 8)*



***There are many upcoming activities,
but the Green Valley Branch looked forward to the Fall Forum.***

***Co-president Amy Perlick managed the registration
Co-president Nancy Puckett served as greeter.***

A BIG
thank
you
♥

Many of our branch members attended the Fall Forum.

Northwest Valley

by Rosemary Dougherty, President

Well, here we are---another Holiday Season. Please join us at our upcoming December and January events. A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered to help at these events. The branch needs your participation to fulfill its mission, so let's have fun doing it!

First of all, I would like to thank Marge Whitman and Susie Jennings for co-chairing the wonderful AAUW-Arizona Fall Forum "Now We Lead." The Forum was very informative and kept us on our toes all day. The program had us doing several activities, networking, and listening. The three speakers were very inspiring. All in all, a great day!

Three amendments to the AAUW Arizona Bylaws were passed during the business meeting. Please see the "Business Meeting Summary" on page 5.

The state board also approved amended versions of both of our Branch Special Projects. The "We Make History!" Project was approved for two years at \$2,000, with the stories generated during that time to come from members of AAUW-Arizona branches. The STEM Kits Project was approved for one year at \$1,200, with subsequent details required on how branch members would participate in the classroom use of the kits. *(To assist with these projects, contact Debbie Hansen and Gloria Fried, respectively.)*

We will continue to collect non-perishable food and hygiene items for the Student Pantry at Rio Salado College. We can help the students' and teachers' budgets stretch even further during this holiday season.

May you experience the light of laughter, the warmth of love, and the joy of gratitude this bright time of year and beyond.

Prescott

by Miriam Haubrich, President

AAUW Prescott has been moving forward on the initiatives established at the Board retreat. The initiatives' focuses are to increase membership, expand our scholarship programs and solidify and advance our Advocacy Coordinator position.

Some of the activities supporting the initiatives were helping with voter registration at two of the local collages and hosting the Yavapai County Registrar Matt Webber as a guest speaker to educate the membership and guests on the ballot process plus the numerous safety measures in place to ensure a safe and secure election.

Now we look forward to the activities preparing for, and surrounding, the December Holiday Brunch and the awarding of the annual membership awards.

The awards are "The Mover and Shaker, Rookie of the Year and the Ongoing Stamina. With each award there is an appropriate trophy, like Wonder Woman for the Mover and Shaker award.

Lastly, January will welcome the return of the

"Reality Store "

where high school I seniors are faced with the financial reality of adulthood.

Look for more details about the Reality Store on our web site.

Thank you for this opportunity to share.

Scottsdale

by Alice Buck, President

September 2024 saw Scottsdale Branch back to meeting at Scottsdale Community College. In this election season, both our September and October meetings had election themes:

In September two League of Women Voters members instructed us about the many, many referenda and two initiatives on our ballot—no recommendations on how to vote but much background information to help us in our decision making.

Our dynamic October presenter was Scottsdale Branch member Jodi Liggett who described for us the statewide and local political scene which is the backdrop for this election. Jodi did give us her thoughts on the most logical vote decisions on most of those referenda and initiatives, including, of course, a YES vote on Prop 139 for which she was a prime mover and which AAUW-AZ endorsed.

An honored guest at our October meeting was AAUW-AZ president Becky Gunn. Branch members were pleased to meet her and hear her greeting during the meeting.

Branch members are also looking forward to the visit in November from AAUW-AZ Public Policy Co-Chairs Beverly Byrd and Betsy Flaten. We will be meeting at the Scottsdale Mustang Library and we will hear from the head librarian about banned books.

And this Fall we gave a Scottsdale Community College scholarship of \$1,000.00 to a woman SCC student.

November also saw us responding to our annual Red Envelope Drive when we will be raising funds for National AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund.

And then in December we have our annual very fun fundraising event—the Holiday Luncheon—with good food and great buys, to benefit both AAUW Funds and our Scottsdale Community College scholarships.

Another project we have just restarted is our annual Adopt-A-Book Drive. Last year we collected 450 books and delivered them to Hohokam Elementary School, a Title I school, and our goal is to match that number for Hohokam Elementary School again.

All in all, a busy start to another great year for Scottsdale Branch.



Official Statement



AAUW is committed to holding all elected officials accountable about **women's rights, bodily autonomy, and access to education and opportunity**, particularly for women of color."

— GLORIA L. BLACKWELL
Chief Executive Officer



***May your holidays be happy days,
Filled with love, and laughter.
And may each day bring joy your way
In the year soon to follow after!***

ARIZONA SUN

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Newsletter Co-editors

Dorothy Alexander – ddalexander13@gmail.com – 317-607-8856

Ronda Clark – rondagclark@gmail.com – 206-384-2662

Please submit all articles to both emails.

Please format in Microsoft Word and photos as Jpeg.

Next Deadline: December 20, 2024

USEFUL LINKS

AAUW Arizona State <https://www.aauwarizona.org/>

AAUW National <https://www.aauw.org/>

