



AAUW Colorado Springs Branch

November 2024 Newsletter

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

What's Inside

President's Message

Holiday Party December 14

STEM DAY Report

Three New Members

List of Board Members

Recycling Plastic Film

Possible New Interest Groups

Save the Date!

Saturday, December 14, 2024, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm

AAUW Holiday Party

Biaggi's Italian Restaurant

Cost: \$40 per person

January 11 DEI Branch Meeting

February 8 Environmental Branch Meeting

March 8 Women's Day Branch Meeting



President's Message

Happy Thanksgiving!

I have so much to be thankful for—first and foremost, being a part of this amazing organization of women! I can't say how proud I am of those who came out and volunteered for our STEM DAY on Friday, November 1. It was an amazing turnout of AAUW volunteers to support our STEM program and all the young women who attended from the area schools. Thank you so much to our STEM Committee, led by **Marilyn Frydrych** and **Brenda Wolfe**, and all the volunteers who made it happen.

Our next meeting will be December 14th, which is our Holiday Luncheon, at Biaggi's. Please make sure that you sign up early. We will have entertainment provided by George Ulrich, who plays guitar and sings holiday music in folk and blues style. I look forward to seeing everyone at our holiday party! Until then, I hope that everyone has a great Thanksgiving!

Thank you,

Crystal Stebbins

President



AAUW COS

Celebrating the Holiday Season

Saturday, December 14, 2024

11:30 AM to 1:00 PM

Biaggi's Ristorante Italiano

1805 Briargate Pkwy, CS, CO

Cost: \$40.00 per person

[1805 Briargate Parkway](#)

Delicious Buffet of Italian food, dessert,
non-alcoholic beverages and cash bar

ENTERTAINMENT: Holiday fun for
everyone by Singer/Guitarist George Ulrich
who plays and sings great holiday songs in folk and blues style.

Space is limited so reserve early.

Please RSVP and pay using the link below:

[Sign up for Holiday Party](#)



Jan Zellmer with electrical circuits
students



Lt. Col. Pickenpaugh, AFA

Girls Engage at AAUW STEM DAY

On November 1 the AAUW Colorado Springs branch successfully hosted 171 girls (about the same number as last year) in our third annual Girl's STEM Day. These girls from four local school districts participated in hands-on experiments in chemistry, electrical circuits and wind generation. From the surveys, 81% of the students said that the chemistry experiment was interesting and fun and 76% of the students said the same about the electricity experiment. Over 40% of the students mentioned the wind generation as fun, as well. All were increases from the pre-survey 31% of the students who stated that they thought science was fun.

Kudos to our branch members who are so supportive. Forty-seven members volunteered their time. A significant number worked two positions, instead of leaving after their first job finished. We cannot take the space to name you all, but please know that you are greatly appreciated for your contributions, and we hope that you enjoyed the day as much as the students. In addition, we could not have been successful without the support of Colorado Springs Utilities, Thrivent, Canteen, and the Catamount Institute.

The girls were inspired by the keynote address from Lieutenant Colonel, Monica Y. Pickenpaugh, U.S. Air Force, PE, PhD, Deputy Department Head and Assistant Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA). Lieutenant Colonel Pickenpaugh graduated from the USAFA in 2007 and then earned two Masters degrees from Cal-Berkeley and the University of Maryland and a PhD in Civil Engineering from the University of Arizona. She is a national Federal Engineer of the Year award winner in 2021 and had an inspiring story to tell to encourage other girls and women to pursue a successful career in engineering.

Other notable results from our day –

- We had two of our recent local scholarship winners volunteer to be experiment assistants.
- The experiment leads were impressed with the engagement of the girls.
- The schoolteachers/chaperones were very complimentary about our annual improvements based on their input on evaluations.
- A previous AAUW local scholarship recipient, Laura Horvath, is now the Harrison District 2 Director of Curriculum and Instruction. She spent the entire day with us. With her scholarship, she attended UCCS and majored in Physics. She is just one example showing that our organization does have an impact on the lives of local women who then pay-it-forward.

Finally, many of the girls mentioned how great it was to be at an event with just girls and make new friends; and as one student commented, "It was fun to be around people who love science!"

Respectively submitted from the STEM Committee comprised of **Marilyn Frydrych, Brenda Wolfe, Pam Doane, Betty Griner, Gretchen Hein, Smith Holt, Nina Rikowski and Cindi Zenkert-Strange.**



Chemistry



Catamount's Tehya Watson checking out a wind generator



Kathy Gutnayer with electrical circuit students



Rieko McAdams and chemistry



Electrical circuits students



Amy Rosewater and Carolyn Heinz
with lunch



Wind Generation



Chemistry students

First Five Photos by **Schon Beechler**

Last Five photos by **Kate Meyer Olson**

2024/2025 Elected Officers/Executive Committee/ Board Members

President: **Crystal Stebbins**
President Elect: **Joan Skoog**
Treasurer: **Robin Depies**
Secretary: **Cindy Keeffe**
Vice President of Membership: **Suzanne Kraus**
Co-VPs of Programs: **Schon Beechler**

Marion Phelps
Co-VPs Community Outreach: **Marilyn Frydrych**
OPEN

2024/2025 Appointed Officers/Board Members

Communications Director: OPEN
Interest Group Coordinator: **Pip Bodkin**
Scholarships Chair: OPEN
Public Policy Director: OPEN
Hospitality Co-Chair: **Kathy Gutnayer**

Membership Matters

Dear Members,

Please welcome these new AAUW branch members, Joyce Aubrey, Missy Starks, and Bethann Woods.

Suzanne Baldwin Kraus

Membership VP

Sbaldwin101@yahoo.com

719-235-7481

October Branch Meeting Report

Ballot Issues Forum





AAUW co- sponsored the ballots issue forum provided by Pikes Peak League of Women Voters on Saturday, October 19 ,2024, followed by a complimentary lunch at the IBEW Union Building.

The three moderators were Angela Stevens, NAACP

Grey Francois, INSIDE OUT,

Audrey McGuire, AAUW

Over forty AAUW members were in attendance.

To help us make informed decisions, the league provided summaries of each measure, background information, key points to consider and a breakdown of what a “Yes” or “No” vote meant.

The prepared PowerPoint description of the ballot measures, their significance and possible consequences of implementation gave important clarity to our upcoming vote.

The LWVCO action and Advocacy Team also provided their stances on the measures.

Shelly Roehrs as a member of the League’s Advocacy Team fielded the questions from the audience, with essential, knowledgeable updates.

Our AAUW mission, advocacy for gender equity, coincides with the League of Women Voters’ mission to empower all citizens to enact their right to vote. We hope to continue our connection to further each other’s commitments.

The League places their forums on YouTube. Click on the link below if you would like to see ours

[Click to Watch Joint Ballot Issues Forum](#)

Darlene Aspedon on YouTube

Many of you remember **Darlene Aspedon**--a longtime member of our branch and a passionate leader of Local History and Hardy Hikers.

Darlene now lives in an assisted living community in Bend, Oregon but at 95 years young, she has not slowed down a bit.

Darlene initiated a book club at her residence and contributes regularly to their newsletter. Her articles span a variety of subjects and when she needs further information, she walks a mile to the local library for research assistance. Her use of library resources has not gone unnoticed by the staff who recently interviewed her for their online publication. If you would like to see and hear Darlene "in her own words," click on the button below.

[Darlene Aspedon's Story](#)

COMMUNITY GIVING PROGRAM

An easy way to give just by shopping!!

King Soopers and Safeway will donate a percentage of your shopping total to our Colorado Springs Branch. All funds received through these Community Giving programs are donated to the AAUW Greatest Needs Fund. Last year we were able to give over \$1300! What a wonderful way to help our National AAUW's mission at no extra cost to you except the time to sign up or reload a card.

King Soopers:

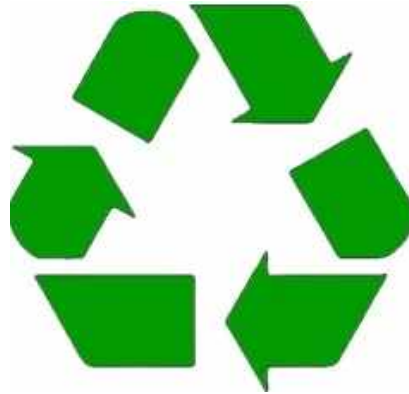
1. Login to King Soopers web site: <https://www.kingsoopers.com>
 2. Create a personal account. Select "Sign In" at the Upper Right of screen. If you already have an account proceed to step 4.
1. First Name
 2. Last Name
 3. Email Address
 4. Create password
 5. ETC., ETC
1. Click on Account Name in upper right-hand corner of Screen. - You may have to login again with name & password if you are a new user.
 2. Select My Account (upper top, right of screen) in Drop Down list
 3. Select Community Rewards at bottom Left of Drop Down List.
 4. Enter AAUW-Colorado Springs Branch – Organization #QB289
 5. Save your selection

Safeway: To donate through your Safeway shopping, you need a rechargeable card which is supplied by Robin Depies. To receive yours please contact **Robin Depies** at 719-761-1802 or email robin@heartfeltfinancialsolutions.com. There is no charge for the card, but when you go to Safeway, you will need to go to the Customer Service counter to load whatever amount you would like on the card, then use it when shopping at Safeway. When that amount is used, take it to customer service to reload.

For every dollar spent, our branch receives between 3% & 5% depending on how much is spent each month.

Interest Groups

Environmental Action Interest Group





With your help, the Environmental Action Interest Group has collected a total of 536 pounds of plastic film so far! However, to receive our next Trex bench for the community we still need to collect over 400 pounds before February. Will you help?

Please save your clean plastic film, and encourage your friends and family, local merchants, and food banks, to contribute. Every little bit helps!

As an extra incentive, as we announced at our Welcome Coffee in September, we will award a prize of an environmentally-conscious goodie bag to the individual or the Interest Group that submits the most plastic, by weight, by the end of December.

You can bring your collection to any of our branch meetings and give it to Schon or Pam and we will do the rest (weigh and photograph the bags and then drop them off at King Soopers). 😊

A handy-dandy sheet with acceptable plastic films can be downloaded from Trex and put in an easy-to-review place like on your refrigerator.

[Click Here for Explanation of Acceptable Plastic Films](#)

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact **Schon** at

Schon.Beechler@Gmail.Com or Pam at Pamela.s.maier@gmail.com

Southwest Studies Interest Group

Arches and Canyons and Monuments, Oh My!



Southwest Studies travelers pause for a photo amidst the stark beauty of famed Monument Valley.

Photo by Kathy Olson

October 6, 2024, 22 travelers left Colorado Springs for SE Utah, SW Colorado and a few spots in between for the annual Southwest Studies trip. Under the able guidance of **Sharon Rice**, SW Studies member, veteran travel planner, and owner of travel company, Get Up and Go, and assisted by fellow SW Studies member, **Kathy Olson**, the group experienced the very best of the region!

Highlights included

- Perfect weather (Thanks for ordering that, **Sharon and Kathy**.)
- The always impressive Colorado Monument (and the giant tortoise that waddled into our midst at the Grand Junction Botanical Gardens.)
- Moab, especially memorable for The Miracle at Moab (ask **Lorelei V!**)
- Canyonlands National Park with incredible overlooks at every turn, an extremely knowledgeable guide, and those memorable Cowboy Cookies! (Check with **Gretchen H** for the recipe.)
- Arches National Monument. Fantastic formations explored on foot!
- A float down the Colorado River through spectacular landscape with a light and sound show about the history of this iconic region projected on the towering cliffs
- Navajo-guided exploration of Monument Valley with unbelievable mesas, buttes, and other rock formations and a screening of Stagecoach, one of hundreds of Hollywood westerns filmed in Monument Valley.
- The tiny houses we stayed in while on the Navajo reservation
- Magical moments at haunting Hovenweep, where Ancestral Puebloans (and peoples both before and after them), left their mark on the Great Sage Plain
- Exploration of Crow Canyon, archeological education and research facility near Cortez CO, for the study of the Ancestral Puebloans and preceding cultures
- A final stop at a reptile (and the odd emu) rescue where we got up close and quite

personal with alligators and snakes (Check with **Cindi Z** and with **Kathy G**, who may soon be headlining a brochure for the facility!)

□ Excellent eats daily, including a fantastic Italian kick-off dinner at Enzos in Grand Junction and an amazing closing Mexican dinner buffet and margs at Calvillos, a family-owned restaurant in Alamosa where we celebrated **Vivian M's** 89 th b-day with the traditional over-sized sombrero! Both places are definitely stop-worthy when exploring this part of the world!

□ An abundance of laughs, shared knowledge, interesting discussions, and all-around fellowship. You should have been there!

Submitted by **Cindi Zenkert-Strange**



SW Studies gang ready to launch for an evening on the Colorado River.

Photo by Kathy Olson

Interest Group News

Calling all members! At the Welcome Coffee last September, some members expressed interest in two new groups that we want to get going.

AFTERNOON READERS 2/LUNCHEON NOVEL 2

This is your opportunity to jump into a book group at the initial stages so you can have your say: When to meet, where to meet, what to read? The book group world is your oyster!

MAH JONGG

We used to have a Mah Jongg group, but it fizzled during Covid. We'd like to revive this fun group game and are looking for some more players to bring their talents, their interest and their enthusiasm. Played before? Great! Help others learn the game. New,

but enthusiastic? Don't worry, there will be others like you, and we will be learning together!

Anyone with a Mah Jongg set they don't want? We'd love for you to come back to the game, but if that's not in your future, consider donating your set to a current member.

For interest in these or any other groups, contact **Pip Bodkin**, Interest Group Coordinator (206) 427-2444,

Listing of Interest Groups

Various Days in the week/month

BRIDGE LIGHT

Mondays

HARDY HIKERS, BOOKS TO FILMS

Tuesdays

DINNER BOOK CLUB, GREAT DECISIONS (Current World Events), MORNING GLORIES BOOK CLUB, READERS' POTPOURRI, TECHNOLOGY, VISUAL ARTS

Wednesdays

AFTERNOON READERS, CHOCOLATE LOVERS, ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION (EA), LUNCHEON NOVEL 1, LUNCHEON NOVEL TOO, SOUTHWEST STUDIES

Thursdays

CHAPTER & VERSE WRITING GROUP, TED TALKS, WALKIE-TALKIE HIKES, WOMEN WHO WRITE

Fridays

EXPLORING LIVES AND CULTURES, LOCAL HISTORY

Fridays or Saturdays

FELLOWSHIP OF THE GRAPE (FOG)

For those who would like more information about interest groups click below:

[Click Here for More Information on Interest Groups](#)

**American Association of
University Women**

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United States of America



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