



# **AAUW Colorado Springs Branch**

## **March 2025 Newsletter**

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

### **What's Inside**

2025 Annual Meeting April 12

Author's Day and Silent Auction May 3

Wine Women & Chocolate

February Branch Meeting Recap

### **Save the Date!**

**April 12, 2025**

**2025 Annual Meeting**

**Election of Officers 2025-2026**

**Honoring 50 years plus members**

Doors open 9:30 AM Program from 10:00 AM to 12 PM

Place: Bethel Lutheran Church

4925 Farmingdale Drive 80917

**[Click here to register for  
2025 Annual Meeting](#)**

**May 3, Saturday**

**Author's Day and Scholarship Fundraiser**

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Broadmoor Community Church

315 Lake Avenue

[Click here to buy tickets  
for Authors Day](#)

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## President's Message



Thank you to everyone who attended our Environmental meeting discussing how we can better serve and protect our environment in our area. This has spurred conversation on how we can be more involved in our community. If you are interested in participating, please reach out to me and let me know, we would love to be more involved and appreciate any information, advice or input!

We are also looking for a few good women (and men)! If anyone is interested in serving as a member of the board or executive committee, please reach out to Joan Skoog or myself. We have a few positions opening:

- VP of Memberships
- Secretary
- President-Elect

If you are not interested in serving in a single capacity, bring a friend, co-positions always add more fun!

Thank you,

**Crystal Stebbins**

President

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## **AAUW Colorado Springs Annual Meeting**

Election of Officers 2025-2026

Celebrating 50 years plus members

Saturday, April 12, 2025 Doors open 9:30 AM

Program from 10:00 AM to 12 PM

Bethel Lutheran Church

4925 Farmingdale Drive, 80917

Join us for light refreshments, installation of new officers and hear:

**Sally Mathewson**

**Vivian McWorter**

**Georgina Burns**

**Candy Crumb**

tell their stories about why they joined AAUW 50 years ago, what they have experienced over the years, why they continued their membership and their thoughts about AAUW today.

**[Click here to register  
for 2025 Annual Meeting](#)**

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## **Annual Branch Nominations Needed**

The Nominating Committee is currently at work contacting potential nominees for the following positions: President-elect, Secretary, Membership Vice President, Community Outreach Vice President and Nominating Committee members. Appointed positions open are: Local Scholarship Chair, Public Policy Chair and Assistant Treasurer.

The Colorado Springs Branch is the largest Branch in Colorado and its success and growth is dependent upon members willing to step up and be a part of the governing

Board. If you are called, PLEASE consider thoughtfully about serving.

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## AAUW Annual Authors Day and Scholarship Fundraiser

Saturday, May 3: 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
(Doors open at 9:00 for auction browsing)  
Broadmoor Community Church  
315 Lake Avenue, 80906

Books, Brunch, Browsing, Bidding, and Buying  
...all for a good cause!



*A word, after a word, after a word, is power!*

Tickets are \$50 and may be purchased at the Eventbrite link below.  
Spread the word and invite a friend!  
Come support our scholarship fund with your  
attendance, donations, and auction finds!

Click here to buy tickets  
for Authors Day

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To learn more about the inspiring authors who are  
joining us  
for Authors Day, read on!

**Buzzy Jackson** is the author of *To Die Beautiful*, winner of a Colorado Book Award for Historical Fiction, and a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award.

From Good Reads: a gripping and timely debut novel, based on the true story of Hannie Schaft: a heroic young Dutch woman who joined the Resistance in Holland

during World War II and became one of the Nazis' most wanted women. Alongside the heartrending story of Hannie, the book offers a timely look at how fascism flourishes and what good people do to fight back.

Jackson holds a PhD in history from the University of California, Berkeley, and lives in Colorado with her family and their free-thinking dog, Ralph. She is currently at work on her next novel, inspired by a historical true crime.

**Michelle Theall** is the author of *The Wind Will Catch You*, an eye-opening, gritty, and hopeful novel about upheaval and resilience, forgiveness and family, love and unexpected allies, all set in motion by issues of social justice and a broken American foster care system. In this powerful story, a young woman searches for the truth about her childhood, and what she finds forever alters her beliefs about home, identity, and family. In addition to her debut novel, Theall is also the author of three nonfiction titles, including her intriguingly titled memoir, *Teaching the Cat to Sit*.

An editor at Alaska magazine and an award-winning nature photographer (think grizzly bears), Michelle Theall splits her time between Kodiak, Alaska and Boulder, Colorado with her wife, their son, and two pups.

**Don't miss this opportunity to be inspired by these authors and their stories!**

#### **Author Selection and Host Committee:**

**Sherri Bristol**

**Frieda Dunlap**

**Cindy Keefe**

**Beth Krasovec**

**Kathy Olson, Chair**

**Fran Schaeffer**

**Cindi Zenkert-Strange**

### **Donations Needed for Authors Day Silent Auction**

Dear Members,

There's already a lot of buzz about our upcoming Silent Auction coming up on Authors Day, May 3rd. We only have two months to achieve our fundraising goals and make this a banner year for our Scholarship Fund, providing our smart but financially challenged women and girls the opportunity to achieve their goals and get an education that will in turn help them reach their best potential. We, your Author's Day Committee, need your support!

#### **These are the BEST ways YOU can help the fundraiser & auction:**

Join the "Team" that is actively soliciting free stuff from area merchants, **OR**, if you have a specific merchant in mind, **contact Lorena so we don't have duplications.**

- **Donate an "activity" or "talent,"** suggestions from the past include Pip's Paella, pickleball lessons, hand painted note cards, etc.
- **Contribute to an Interest Group "Themed Basket"** We suggest that you solicit donated items instead of purchasing or use discounted pricing.
- **Donate \$** directly to the scholarship fund. (Your choice, any amount will be put to good use and is tax deductible.)

**Please, we ask that you do NOT do the following:**

- Purchase gift cards to donate (these are relatively easy to get donated and don't always sell at face value) Caveat - we won't turn these down if you really want to do this!
- Donate used or low-value items, or small items like jewelry (If you wish to donate something "used" please contact the Auction Committee first.)

Our branch has a team of auction volunteers who contact area merchants to obtain donated items like restaurant and shopping gift cards, theatre tickets and more. If you'd like to be a part of this team, contact **Lorena Wilder** who has the master list. We want to ensure that merchants are not being contacted several times over.

Warmest Regards,

**Pip Bodkin**

Interest Group Coordinator

(206) 427-2444

[pipbodkin@gmail.com](mailto:pipbodkin@gmail.com)

**Your Silent Auction Committee**

**Lorena Wilder** – [lorenacwilder@gmail.com](mailto:lorenacwilder@gmail.com) (719) 237-3597

**Cindy Keeffe** – [ckeeffe58@hotmail.com](mailto:ckeeffe58@hotmail.com) (719) 482-8472

**Joan Skoog** – [joanskoog1@gmail.com](mailto:joanskoog1@gmail.com) (719) 201-6289



Pikes Peak Women invites you to...

# WINE, WOMEN & CHOCOLATE

HONORING & CELEBRATING HEROINES  
OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION

WEDNESDAY,  
MARCH 12  
5:30 - 7:30 PM



COS CITY HUB  
4304 AUSTIN  
BLUFFS PKWY.

Featuring **wine** from local distributors, **chocolate** delicacies and,  
most importantly, the **women** who lead our community

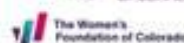
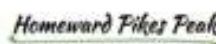
**BUY YOUR \$30 TICKET ONLINE!**

<https://bit.ly/WWC2025Tix>

Presented by:



In partnership with:



February 15 Branch Meeting Recap  
Environmental Preservation Efforts





Kathy Andrew from El Paso Country Colorado Conservation Assistant

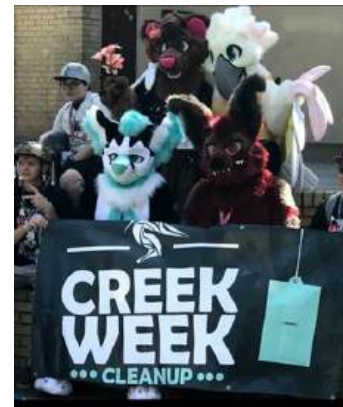
Jerry Cordova from Storm Water Enterprises of Colorado Springs

Natalie Johnson, Manitou Art Center, Executive Director

Photos by Kate Meyer Olson

Our February 15<sup>th</sup> Branch meeting, **"Environmental Preservation Efforts: How AAUW Members Can Help Lead Positive Change in Our Community"** was held at the UCCS Downtown facility and featured three passionate and knowledgeable speakers who described the work that they and their organizations do and offered suggestions for how individuals could get involved in environmental preservation efforts.

The first speaker, Kathy Andrews, Environmental Division Manager, El Paso County, described the major responsibilities for her division which include running a household hazardous waste facility, ensuring compliance with laws regarding threatened and endangered species, noxious weed management, and environmental compliance by El Paso County.



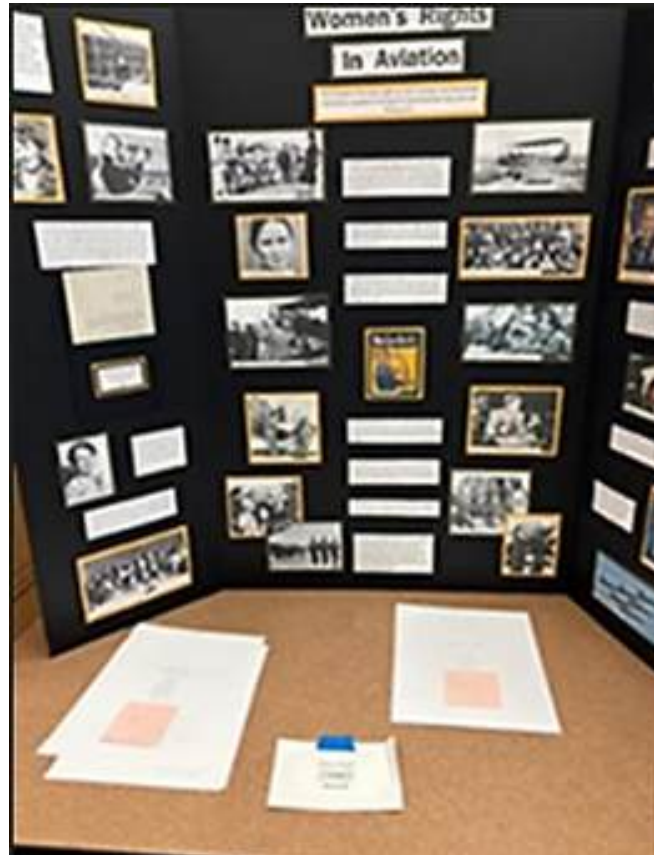
Jerry Cordova, Stormwater Specialist for Colorado Springs Stormwater Enterprise described how he educates thousands of youths yearly through STEM school programs, engages with our community on the Adopt-A-Waterway Program, storm drain marking efforts, and the Storm Drain Art Program. As a founding member of Creek Week and initiator of Trash Mobs (costume litter cleanups), Jerry noted in 2024 he led 26 events gathering a whopping 28 tons of trash.

Our final panelist was Natalie Johnson, Executive Director of the Manitou Art Center, Mayor Pro Tem for the Manitou Springs City Council, and Vice President of the Board



of Education for MSSD14. Natalie noted that sustainability is a part of all aspects of her work and she advocates for nontraditional partnership opportunities to help communities tackle the complex challenge that recycling presents for our communities today.

Submitted by **Schon Beechler** and **Pam Maier**



## **AAUW Honors Pikes Peak History Competition Winners**

On March 1, **Kathy McBride** and **Betty Slaughter** represented our Branch at the Pikes Peak Region History Day Competition held at Colorado College. They had the honor to judge the many impressive entries that honored women in history. Our Branch has participated in judging this competition for many years and awards \$200 to be split among the winners. Kathy and Betty are excited to share that this year's winners were:

"Women in Aviation" Senior Exhibit Kylie Olson

"Stepping Outside the Repeats: Women in Classical Music and How They Broke Gender Expectations" Senior Exhibit Sarah Beck

"The Life and Legacy of Loretta Ford" Junior Documentary, Sophia Gum, Emmeline McCormick, Khlohee Montgomery, Yulene Sheoship (It's the story of the woman who promoted nurse practitioners)

"Rachel Noel: A Legacy in Courage and Conviction" Senior Paper, Sydney Gollihare.....This was just an incredibly researched paper about desegregating the Denver Public Schools

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## 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**  
**Marian 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**

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### Interest Groups



#### Environmental Action Interest Group

**The Environmental Action Interest Group** has started our new plastic sheeting drive to receive another Trex Bench for our community. To get credit for our dropoffs, Trex requires that each bag of plastic be weighed and photographed and they request that you take the photo "sideways" (i.e. landscape format) with the shutter button to the left. Please send your photo and the weight of each bag you are dropping off to **Schon Beechler** ([Schon.Beechler@Gmail.Com](mailto:Schon.Beechler@Gmail.Com)). Or, if you prefer, Schon or Pam can collect your plastic from you and drop it off.

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

#### Southwest Studies Interest Group

## Join Us On the 2025 Southwest Studies Annual Trip

Are you looking for a fun and unique experience this summer? If so, consider joining the SW Studies group for the **Historic Gems of Colorado Trip** from **Sept. 15 – 19<sup>th</sup>**.

The mountains are calling, and we must go! No matter how long or short a time you've called Colorado home, this trip offers new adventures, learning experiences, great food, amazing scenery and plenty of camaraderie!

The trip is still under development, but some of the highlights include:

- A tour of the Opera House in Leadville and the famous National Mining Hall of Fame Museum.
- A possible gondola ride on the Silver Queen in Aspen, followed by a guided tour of historic Aspen, and another event to be announced.
- Visit a Lavender Farm in the morning and take a wagon ride through a Palisades peach orchard in Paonia in the afternoon.
- Enjoy a jeep ride in scenic mountains of Marble; followed by a visit to Frank Mechau's (a well-known Colorado artist) home; and a possible tour of the famous Redstone Castle.
- Last day, enjoy a ride on the world-famous Georgetown Loop Railroad in Georgetown.
- This is a five-day, four-night trip on a comfortable bus, with several meals and all lodging included.
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Only a few slots remain, so contact **Sharon Rice** at [sharonsrice43@gmail.com](mailto:sharonsrice43@gmail.com), 719-290-6426 or **Kathy Olson**, [kathrynolson@msn.com](mailto:kathrynolson@msn.com), 719-331-8891. A \$100 deposit reserves your spot.

## 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, MAHJONG

### 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**

4660 Adieu Cir, Colorado Springs  
United States of America



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