



A monthly publication of AAUW, San Francisco, est. in 1886

December 2015

President's Message

Here's hoping everyone enjoyed a happy Thanksgiving. Despite the worldwide turmoil, we have much for which to be thankful. Our branch has some new members, as well as many faithful continuing members. We are again raising money to send 14 or 15 girls to Tech Trek math and science camp next summer. Anyone who is interested in helping with the Tech Trek program by serving as an interviewer or follow-up family coordinator would be welcomed. It is a truly rewarding experience. Just contact Elaine Butler for details.

A shout-out to co-president Andrea Laudate for celebrating her birthday by requesting her friends to donate to Tech Trek in lieu of presents. She has raised a significant amount of money by doing so.

Andrea, Pat Morin and I attended the Interbranch Council recently and heard from other branches about their activities. The Interbranch Council itself is sponsoring a luncheon on March 12, 2016, at the Basque Cultural Center to focus on our efforts to secure more women and girls in STEM professions. All of our branch members are invited, and the branch will subsidize the cost of those who attend.

Finally, don't forget the Holiday Luncheon on December 12 at Mescolanza Restaurant. You should all have received an invitation. We have a fun surprise planned.

Andrea Laudate and Barbara Spencer, Co-Presidents

AAUWSF Board Meeting

The next board meeting is on **Wednesday, December 9**, at Corrine Sacks' condo, 1835 Franklin St. #401 (between Sacramento and Clay). Street parking should be available, but if there is a problem, pull into the driveway of the condo building, tell the attendant you are visiting Corrine, and ask if there is space to park. Call Corrine at 415-292-4130 if you have questions. The potluck will begin at 6:30 pm, and the meeting will start at 7pm. Please let Andrea know if you are unable to attend.

Tech Trek

There have been some important changes to Tech Trek. Our national organization has taken over the administration of the Tech Trek program, and other states are now hosting Tech Trek camps. From now on, checks for donations to Tech Trek should be made out to AAUW with San Francisco Branch in the memo line. The checks will be submitted to the California Camp Treasurer who will forward them to AAUW in Washington, D.C. where they will be cashed and acknowledged. The process should be accomplished in a couple of weeks. Our California camp directors are happy about this administrative change and expect it to work well. Our members may also make Tech Trek donations on the national website by using the donate button. You will need to list your member ID number which may be found on the AAUW Outlook magazine that is mailed to all members. You may also obtain your ID number by contacting Nancy

Shapiro. The online donations will be then credited to our branch.

Afternoons With Books

Date: Friday, December 18 at 1:30 p.m.

Book/Author: Candide, by Voltaire

Hostess: Michelle Mammini, 2250 Greenwich St.
Please RSVP to Michelle at 415-346-9114 or email
mmammini@pacbell.net

International Book Group

There will be no meeting in December.

Annual Holiday Party

We will be celebrating the holiday season together at one of our favorite restaurants, **Mescolanza**, which has re-opened in a new location at 3750 Geary Blvd. If you haven't already made a reservation, contact Andrea ASAP. We look forward to seeing you on **Saturday, December 12 at 11 AM.**

Tech Trek

A cheer for our Co-President, Andrea Laudate, for having a special birthday party and asking for donations for Tech Trek in lieu of gifts!

Here is a list of donors from this event.

Mary Suter

Helynna Brooke

Kathleen Beck

Craig Smith

John De Castro

Peggy Kavounas

Pat Morin

Other donors:

Cathy Corcoran & Noelle Hynes

Connie Armitage

Thank you so much for your generous donations.

Elaine Butler, Tech Trek Co-ordinator

If you would like to donate to the Tech Trek project, please write a check for any amount to AAUW and list in the memo line Tech Trek. Mail the check to: Elaine Butler, Tech Trek, 124 Amber Dr. San Francisco, CA 94131

Help Wanted Tech Trek!!

Tech Trek Help needed for the **Informational Meeting on Sunday, January 1 from 1:00 to 2:30**, at the Taraval Police Station at 2345 24th Ave., SF

We are holding this meeting for parents and students, who have been nominated by their science or math teacher. The meeting ensures that the parents and students know what the program expects of them before they complete their applications. It helps us get an applicant pool of girls interested in math and science from which we will be able to choose who to sponsor.

Volunteers should arrive at 12:30 to help set up, and stay after the meeting to clean up. We need to be out by 2:45 pm at the latest because another group is coming in at 3:00 pm to use the room.

Please contact Elaine Butler, 415-305-2220 or elainebutler124@comcast.net

January

-Take names and emails of students wanting to apply at meeting

-Email applications to those signed up.

March 12 and 13 (Saturday and Sunday) Tech Trek interviews

People are needed to work on teams of adults and tech trek alums to interview parents or prospective

campers. A list of questions and an evaluation sheet are provided so each interviewee has the same chance to be chosen. A meeting will be held within 2 weeks to choose the 2016 campers.

Elaine Butler, Tech Trek Coordinator

Travel to Cuba

The Oakland Piedmont AAUW branch is sponsoring a comprehensive trip to Cuba from **January 3 to 18**, and is open to all AAUW members and guests.

Space is available.

For details, contact the tour leader:

Lenore Gallin, Ph.D., at LGallin@dvc.edu

An Odd and Cloudy Batch Pat Camarena

After completing college just after WWII, Stephanie Kwolek had originally planned to continue directly on to medical school. Limited finances forced her to postpone that goal. Instead she accepted what she thought would only be a temporary position with the Dupont Company as a research chemist. There she was able to pursue her love of science as well as her other long time interest in fashion design and textile materials. She found the polymer research at Dupont so interesting and challenging that she soon forgot about her medical school plans. Instead she made chemistry her lifetime career staying with Dupont for many, many years. Her unusual discovery in her lab was to be of world-wide significance. Scientists had learned how to create polymers just prior to WWII. Polymers are chemical compounds made of smaller, identical molecules linked together. Nylon was one of these early polymers. Nylon proved to be more useful and efficient than cotton cloth. In the 1960s Stephanie and her lab began to search for a new generation of high-performance fibers. Using a different approach

this time, Stephanie became curious about a thin and cloudy batch of polymers, very unlike the usual clear and viscous solutions she had previously observed. She continued to work with the milky chemicals. Her diligence paid off big time leading to the development of Kevlar, a very strong, super-stiff fiber that proved to be heat-resistant, five times stronger than steel, and lighter than fiberglass. In the years since her original discovery, hundreds of products have been developed that use Kevlar in their construction. Some of these products are brake pads, bridge cables, gloves, tires, boots, and, of course, bullet-proof vests which contain several layers of fabric woven from Kevlar. Such vests have saved thousands of lives. After patenting Kevlar, Stephanie continued working for Dupont until her retirement. Many awards were presented to her over the years. In 1994 she became the fourth woman to be inducted into the National Inventor's Hall of Fame. In 2003 she became a member of the National Women's Hall of Fame. Stephanie Kwolek's curiosity, as well as her decision to take this "temporary" job, has made many lives safer.

www.womeninventors.com

www.famousScientists.org

www.chemheritage.org

Playing Now

Paula Campbell

Sarah Gubbins' **The Kid Thing**, now at the New Conservatory Theatre Center, is a thought provoking, emotion stirring, beautifully produced play.

Becca Wolff's sensitive direction turns this story of two lesbian couples and their desire, (or lack of desire) to become parents into a piercing analysis of gender expectations and role play in a culture that enshrines parenthood, while at the same time is only beginning to tolerate same sex unions. Even

so, the topic is universal. Gay or straight, how strong is the urge to procreate, and at what cost might the result come?

The two couples are deep in complex, nuanced role play – the women are super fem lipstick lesbians, their butch partners both dress and behave as men, for whom they are often mistaken, but never deny their basic womanhood. Margo (Kimberly Ridgeway) and Nate (Jaqu Nguyen Victor) are ecstatic that they are soon to be parents. Margo has been impregnated with sperm donated by Jacob, (Nick Mandracchia) an old college friend. The couple invites their friends Leigh (Sarah Coykendall) and Darcy (Desiree Rogers) to dinner to announce their good news. Leigh, eager to have a baby herself, is thrilled, Darcy is cool to the idea, but tries to seem open, though she really has serious doubts.

Act II of **The Kid Thing** raises more questions. Fidelity and betrayal issues are raised, as Leigh tries to get pregnant, and Darcy finally expresses her absolute opposition to it. Darcy seems driven by fear – fear of how the world will treat such a child, fear of how she'll be perceived, fear of losing the image she's worked so hard to create and maintain. Most of all, she's selfishly wrapped in a cloak of self-protection, which she will not drop, even at the expense of her life with Leigh.

Enough plot details here, no spoilers from this reviewer. Suffice to say that there are plenty of revelations, surprises, and shockers to keep us enthralled in our seats.

All five actors are wonderful – believable and empathetic. My hat is off most particularly to Jaqu Nguyen Victor, whose portrayal of Nate is amazing. Victor's elastic body and face make her thoughts and emotions so visible that there's almost no

need for words. She is an amazingly expressive performer – I was awed by her.

It's a touchy question – do (or should) most women yearn to become parents – how deep is the basic need? What about women who don't want children – what does the world say to (or about) them? As I said, this isn't confined to any particular gender – or gay or straight -- all people face this.

The Kid Thing is an entertaining, witty, provocative night at the theater. The audience, this reviewer included, were on their feet cheering at the curtain call. To say I loved the play is an understatement. I urge everyone to see it.

The Kid Thing, New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness Avenue at Market, San Francisco, CA 94102.
Through Dec. 13. Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat 8pm, Wed and Sun 2pm. Box Office [415-861-8972](tel:415-861-8972) Online
<http://www.nctcsf.org/2015-16-season/the-kid-thing>

New Members

Mary-Anna Rae
Trina Clayton

December Birthdays

Noelle Hynes	December 3
Jennifer Berger	December 10
Angie Durso	December 23

Birthday Not Announced?

If your birthday is not there and you'd like to have it included (or corrected), contact the Membership VP.

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December 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Holiday Party
13	14	15	16	17	18 Aft w/Books 1:30 PM	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

If only we'd stop trying to be happy we could have a pretty good time
 Edith Wharton



Avanti Editor

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 San Francisco, CA 94131-0405
 Address Correction Requested

The American Association of University Women (AAUW), founded in 1881, is the nation’s leading organization advocating equity for women and girls. It has a national membership of 150,000. People of every race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, and level of physical ability are invited to join.

AAUW California was launched in San Francisco in 1886 and began lobbying immediately. Check out our website www.aauwsf.org



San Francisco Inc. (CA) Branch

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

Marie Curie & AAUW

The year was 1919. Europe had been ravaged by World War I and radium was far too expensive for a scientist of modest means to afford for experiments. This was true even for one as famous as Madame Marie Curie. As a result, her groundbreaking research had reached a virtual standstill. Then the AAUW came to the rescue. Members from Maine to California helped raise an astonishing \$156,413, enabling Madame Curie to purchase one gram of radium and continue her experiments that helped her create the field of nuclear chemistry and forever change the course of science. Madame Curie received the Nobel Prize for her work, but was not admitted to the French *Academie des Sciences* until she won an incredible second Nobel Prize...all because she was a woman. More than 75 years later, there are still only three women members.

Pay Equity

AAUW has been on the front lines fighting for Pay Equity for over a hundred years.

AAUW was there in the Oval Office in 1963 when President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law.

AAUW was there in 2009 when President Barack Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law.

AAUW continues the fight for the passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act to ensure women have further equal pay protections. The pay gap is real.

AAUW will continue the fight to achieve pay equity; the economic security of American families depends on it.

Legal Advocacy Fund

Founded in 1981, the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) works to achieve equity for women in higher education by recognizing indicative efforts to improve the climate for women on campus; by offering assistance to women faculty, staff, and students who have grievances against colleges and universities; and by supporting sex discrimination lawsuits.

The LAF Board only approves support of cases which are currently involved in litigation, and that have the potential to set legal precedent.

The Legal Advocacy Fund’s annual Progress in Equity Award recognizes indicative and replicable college and university programs.