

Edmonds SnoKing Branch Newsletter



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- **September Branch Meeting, Sept. 10, 10am, Edmonds College.** Guest speaker is the Director of the Refugee Artisan Initiative (see page 3)
- **Diversity Book Group, Sept. 8, 1:30pm at Merrie Emmons's.** *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren
For more information, contact Cathy Draper.
- **Coffee and Conversation, Wednesday, Sept. 21, 11am,** at Third Place Books Commons, Lake Forest Park (see page 3)
- Watch our website for news of the **field trip to the Refugee Artisan Initiative** later this month.

Front photo © Mary Ross
Send submissions to Editor
Pam Canell



President's Message

A warm *Welcome Back* to each of you. Our theme this year is “Building Bridges.”

We will be working on becoming more cohesive among our various committees, strengthening existing relationships with Edmonds College and our event sponsors, creating new bridges as we increase our membership and partner with Everett Community College/WSU-Everett.

I hope you had a fun summer and are ready to join us September 10 as we kick off our new program year.

We have several new members to meet, and we'll hear about our board members' fun plans!

See you soon!

—Jodi Forsell



Board Notes

At the Board Retreat on August 22, each team leader presented plans for this year’s focus and activities. They were inspired in great part by

the discussions and ideas from the Branch Retreat in June. Members will hear all about what’s coming this year at the Branch meeting on September 10.



We have a successful 501(c)(3) organization, so we have an advantage in raising funds for scholarships and other educational opportunities for women and girls. With the recent federal income tax changes to the standard deduction and offsets arising from individual taxpayer deductions, many individuals no longer need or seek charitable tax deductions—*but businesses still benefit*. Businesses can get an income tax deduction for their contributions, as well as certain recognition in the community for “doing the right thing.” So our marketing for donations has shifted from individuals to local businesses. Primarily though the spring art show, we have a core of local business sponsors and contributors. This has spread the contributor base beyond our membership to bigger local pockets.

Not to discount individual donors. Essential donors over the past year have included bequests from deceased members and their families, and contributions from related

networks of their supporters. Thanks to their generosity, our base fund has *tripled!* Our goal of one day having an endowment fund that grows based upon investments, as well as from contributions, is almost within reach.

You can add to the growth of the Foundation base throughout the year! You don’t have to wait until the Art Show, or a specific fund-raising event. You can add a written bequest into your existing Will or Trust to become effective upon your death; or set up a recurring small periodic contribution; or encourage your family members to make their gift (birthday, holiday, etc.) to you through a contribution to A3E; and you can make a note to set aside a portion of your annual IRA-401(k) withdrawal as a donation.

Thank you for thinking about these options. We need to be creative in our giving.

—Susan Teel, President

To Kingston with Friends

Our second field trip last year was on July 20th, and nine branch members participated. (*See more photos on pg 5*) We walked onto the Edmonds ferry which took us to Kingston for lunch on an unusually bright, sunny day. We ate a delicious lunch on the covered deck of the Kingston Ale House and then crossed the street



Linda Clay, Jodi Forsell, Mary Ross

to try out a few of the unique flavors offered by the nearby gourmet ice cream shop.

Watch for upcoming branch field trip notices in the newsletters. These outings are a great way to get to know people and enjoy all this area has to offer.

—*Debby Smith*
Former Membership Team Co-chair

Membership News

There is good news and not so good news with Membership this year. Not so good: we lost several members. It's always sad and a little scary seeing several leave at one time, but I believe we will rebound and build well in the coming year.

Good news: To date, we have four new members added to the roster: *Sita Bhaskaran, Jennifer Long, Kathleen Andleman, and Pat Hooper*. Each will bring new ideas, a variety of skills, background, and interests. I will be asking each of them to share a brief bio in future newsletters.

Meeting in person offers us the opportunity to welcome each of them, so please don't wait until you see their bios in the newsletter!

Coffee and Conversations will be both in person and on Zoom. But not at the same time! The first meeting will be September 21, 11 am at Third Place Books Commons in Lake Forest Park. October's meeting will again be on the third Wednesday, October 19, 7 pm on Zoom. Meetings will continue to alternate between in-person and on Zoom. Let's see how it goes.

—*Linda Clay*
New Membership Team Chair

And Our Year Begins . . .



I hope you can join our kick-off meeting for the year! We will be meeting once again at Edmonds College, at 10:00 am on Saturday, September 10.

The program will be in two parts. Ming-Ming Tung-Edelman, director of the Refugee Artisan Initiative, will introduce us to this exciting new organization that works to give refugee women a path to financial independence. We hope to have some of their items for sale, and to arrange a field trip to their space on Lake City Way later in the month.

The meeting will also include an introduction to our new Board, and plans for the coming year. No one can predict the future, or Covid for that matter, but we are hoping this year we can both see more of each other in person, and take advantage of the Zoom tool in a way that also helps us connect with each other.

AAUW-WA has an amazing series of webinars scheduled for this fall. The webinars address financial independence and equity for women. Our branch will be trying something new with the webinars this fall. We hope to be able to replay the recorded webinars at a convenient time for our members, at a central location that allows us to watch it together, and then break into discussion groups. We are working with the state to make sure we have the technology and speaker permissions lined up to do this. Stay tuned!

—*Ann McNulty*
Program Team Chair

Please Note

COVID has changed our world. Edmonds College is diligently contact tracing, so all visitors to campus—including our branch members— must fill out an online attestation form **on the morning** of the meeting. See instructions [here](#). Parking permits are also required and can be printed [here](#).



Fundraising

Raffle Baskets are making a comeback to our monthly meetings! I would like to reinstate the prior practice of members volunteering to donate a basket for a particular month. There will be a sign up at our first meeting on Saturday, September 10.

The Art Show will be held again this year and is in the early stages of proposal-making and planning. A presentation of the proposal will be made to the A3E Foundation for ‘start up’ money in the next month. Stay tuned!

—Linda Clay
Fundraising Team Chair



Our Branch social media presence has grown! We are now on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), thanks to Elena Cervantes. Check it out!

Book Sale

Did you read any great books over the summer? Do you think another branch member might

enjoy reading them, also? If so, please bring them to our September branch meeting for our book sale. All funds raised will support our branch operations. Also, bring your wallet! We ask a minimum of \$1.00 for each paperback and \$2.00 for each hardcover book purchased. For questions/comments, contact Lori Cross.

Public Policy

Student Debt forgiveness: a good next step, a *Band-aid*, or a slap in the face?

News is abuzz with praise and rotten tomato responses to Biden Administration's finally much anticipated executive action on student debt forgiveness. The Everett Herald [Student loan forgiveness a 'Band-Aid' for big wound, say locals in debt](#) by Mallory Gruben provides a local perspective. The Spokesman Review quotes WA state Congresswoman Rodgers (CD5) calling the debt relief a [slap in the face to Eastern Washingtonians](#). The [Bellingham Herald](#) provides a broader Washingtonian perspective calling out state specific data: "In Washington state, residents have \$28 billion in student loan debt, with an average debt of \$35,510 . . . out of Washington's 788,500 federal loan borrowers, 49.3% are under the age of 35."

What national, state and local news is missing is a piece about the impact of student loan debt on women.

AAUW has been researching and reporting on this for years. See our 2021 update to [Deeper in Debt](#) and share it! National AAUW used [social media](#) to call out that "women hold about two-thirds of the nation's student debt, with Black women holding the most of any group." AAUW links student debt to the huge gender pay gap

that widens over time, making paying off student debt much more difficult.

AAUW-WA and Washington State Branches are also responding with Facebook posts, tweets, and Letters to the Editor to add this missing gender equity piece to the conversation about student debt.

At the Edmonds SnoKing Board retreat we talked about how our committees and members can work better together. Let's look for and share opportunities this year for AAUW-ESK advocacy actions. The announcement of student debt forgiveness for federal student loans is a great opportunity to add gender equity into our community conversations! Be sure to add it to your discussions with friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues.

AAUW-WA is posting a new resource on our state webpage under Actions that includes Letters to the Editor (LTE) guidelines and examples (using student debt forgiveness), and a list of newspapers that accept LTEs. Members can write their own personal LTE and use AAUW data, or comment on social media by liking, commenting, and sharing social media posts from AAUW national, state, and Edmonds-SmoKing. I really appreciate our Communications Director Mary R for all her amazing work, including her webpage and social media expertise and look forward to Elena C joining in to add to our new [Twitter account](#).

During election season, consider adding a nonpartisan thank you note to your written communications by ending with: "thank you to elected officials who support women's education and equal pay initiatives" to remind everyone (voters and elected officials) of the need to elect officials who support women's rights.

Part of AAUW advocacy is keeping gender equity in the conversation! Thanks to all the amazing AAUW members who support women's rights through your membership and supportive conversations.

—*Sandra Distelhorst*
Public Policy Team Lead

More Kingston Photos



Sue Renhard,
Susan Teel,
and new
member
Sita
Bhaskaran



Ann McNulty,
Ruth Allen