


THE CONNECTION
 of California

WEST CONTRA COSTA BRANCH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy
westcontracosta-ca.aauw.net

VOLUME XXXX

NEWSLETTER 3

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2024

***COME MEET SISTERS IN CRIME MYSTERY WRITER
 ELLEN KIRSCHMAN***

Saturday, November 16, 2024

Christ Lutheran Church
 780 Ashbury (at Stockton), El Cerrito
 10:00 a.m. meeting gathering
 10:30 a.m. Talk



Ellen Kirschman is a PhD clinical psychologist specializing in the treatment of first responders with work related stress. She has published much in her field including “I Love a Cop: What Police Families Need to Know”. Fortunately she has also created Dot Meyerhoff, a police therapist, in a fictional mystery series. Book five, “Call Me Carmella”, will be available on November 26.

In addition to talking about her new book, Ellen will share her unique and fascinating path to writing mysteries. All are welcome.

Maria LaForge, Program Co-Chair

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is so good to be having regular in-person meetings. We continue with our 2024-2025 Program. On **Saturday, November 16**, we had Sisters in Crime writer Ellen Kirschman. See write up Page 1. Then on **Saturday, January 18**, Emily Corwin will speak on behalf of the San Francisco Estuary Institute in Richmond. Our Board meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month will remain via Zoom. The **next Board Meeting is Tuesday, January 28, at 2:00 pm**. All members are invited to attend.

Our **Holiday Party** was at the home of Judy and Floyd Sam on Saturday, December 14. See write up Page 5. Guests brought a holiday treat to share. Also books and donations were collected for the Read-Aloud Volunteer Program and the Grant Birthday Book Project.

The AAUW CA Public Policy Committee reports a successful 2024 Legislative Agenda. See write up Page 6.

Thanks for all your support. We are very busy people and have many commitments. I appreciate all you do for the Branch. I enjoy working with such special women.

Roberta Montgomery, President



IN MEMORIAM

I am sorry to report that Marianne ("M") Selph passed away on September 9. M was an active member for over 18 years. She is our Public Policy Officer and regularly attended our Zoom Board meetings. She will be missed.

Roberta Montgomery, President



CALENDAR – MONTHLY EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2024:

CalACS-WCC Virtual Meeting: **Saturday, November 2, at 11:00 am** Dr. Carolyn Pearce's talk "*Reducing Risk and Uncertainty Associated with Nuclear Waste Processing and Disposal: A Hanford Tank Waste Case Study*". See Write-up Page 4.

Lunch Group: **Wednesday, November 6, at Noon** Lama Beans Café, 1290. 6th Street, Berkeley
RSVP Maria (cell: 1-925-899-3278; d.laforge@sbcglobal.net).

Meeting: 10:00 am at Christ Lutheran Church **Saturday, November 16, at 10:30 am.** Sisters in Crime mystery writer Ellen Kirschman. See write-up Page 1.

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, November 19, 2024 at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

DECEMBER 2024:

Holiday Party: **Saturday, December 14, 2:00-4:00 pm** at the home of Judy and Floyd Sam, 8821 Terrace Drive, El Cerrito (510-527-1661). See Write-up Page 5.

JANUARY 2025:

Meeting: 10:00 am at Christ Lutheran Church **Saturday, January 18, at 10:30 am** Emily Corwin will speak on behalf of the San Francisco Estuary Institute in Richmond.

Lunch Group: **Tuesday, January 21, at 12 noon** Bua Thai Kitchen, 1045 San Pablo Avenue, Albany
RSVP Maria (cell: 1-925-899-3278; d.laforge@sbcglobal.net).

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

SUNSHINE

Know someone who needs a note? Sally Dunham is our Sunshine Chair and will send cards on behalf of our branch. If you know of a member in need of a get well, condolence or congratulations card, contact Sally at (510) 758-4094 or sallydunham1@gmail.com.

HEAR CAROLYN PEARCE'S TALK

Reducing Risk and Uncertainty Associated with Nuclear Waste Processing and Disposal: A Hanford Tank Waste Case Study

The California Section American Chemical Society
Women Chemists Committee

Virtual Meeting
Saturday, November 2, 2024
10:30 am Chatting
11:00 am Talk and Discussion

Our member Elaine Yamaguchi has invited us to attend this CalACS-WCC virtual meeting. Information about Carolyn Pearce, PhD and her talk is below.

All are welcome! Please visit the CalACS website www.calacs.org to register for this meeting. **Register before Thursday, October 31, 12 noon.** The ZOOM link will be sent out by Brown Paper Tickets on or before the day of the event.

About the Speaker

Carolyn Pearce joined Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) in 2016 and is a scientist and team lead in the Subsurface Science Group. She directs the PNNL-led US DOE Office of Science supported Ion Dynamics in Radioactive Environments and Materials Energy Frontier Research Center, and leads research programs for US DOE Environmental Management, Office of River Protection, and Richland Limited. She characterizes solutions and minerals relevant to radioactive waste storage and processing, determining reaction mechanisms and kinetics that affect radionuclide stability in waste forms and subsurface environments. Dr. Pearce obtained her B.Sc. and PhD from the University of Leeds, UK, and is Honorary Professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Manchester, UK, and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, Washington State University.

Abstract

The Hanford site in Washington State, which produced plutonium for the US weapons program, is the most contaminated nuclear site in the nation and is its largest environmental clean-up activity. During weapons production, 56 million gallons of liquid radioactive/chemical waste (sludge, salt cake, and supernatant), with 170 million Curies of radioactivity and 240,000 tons of complex chemicals, was generated. This liquid waste is the primary environmental contamination risk, currently intended to be processed into a glass form for stabilization and to allow its radioactivity to safely dissipate over hundreds to thousands of years. Uncertainty associated with nuclear waste processing and disposal can be mitigated by: (i) characterizing waste chemistry; and (ii) understanding waste form behavior in the environment. A key issue of Hanford tank waste processing and disposal is that, although radionuclides such as technetium are the risk drivers, it is the 'benign' dominant elements such as aluminum that dictate the processing limits and uncertainties, given that tank waste is removed on a volume basis. Basic research by the Ion Dynamics in Radioactive Environments and Materials (IDREAM) Energy Frontier Research Center (EFRC) has focused on unravelling complex ion coordination, solvation, pairing with other ions, and cluster formation in these radioactive and highly concentrated chemical environments. The goal of IDREAM is to understand the fundamental mechanisms of aluminum speciation change that underpin solubility, nucleation and precipitation in Hanford tank waste to accelerate safe, cost-effective, and efficient waste processing. Once the waste has been processed, it must be demonstrated that risk driving radioactive elements will be contained in the wastefrom for thousands of years until they become safe. Archeological artifacts, analogous to wastefrom materials, i.e., glass, that have been left by our ancestors and exposed to the environment for thousands of years can be used to validate and refine predicted wastefrom durability.

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY!

Saturday, December 14, 2024
2:00-4:00 p.m.
At the home of Judy and Floyd Sam
8821 Terrace Drive, El Cerrito (510-527-1661)

Please join us at Judy and Floyd's home in the El Cerrito hills for our annual celebration of the holiday season. We always have a wonderful time enjoying the company of our friends, the splendid views, and the holiday cheer. Please remember to bring a holiday treat of finger food – a plate of cookies or small sandwiches to share. Our host and hostess will provide coffee and tea.

Please also bring a book for a young child or a donation to be used to buy children's books. We are collecting books and donations to support two programs: **Read-Aloud Volunteer Program** for children at kindergarten through second grade levels, and the Grant Birthday Book Project for first and second grade students. Your generosity in the past has been wonderful. Our contributions are greatly appreciated by the children who benefit as they enjoy the stories while improving their knowledge and skills.

Dear friends, please join us for some holiday treats, drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Let's get together and enjoy the season of fellowship, stories of our year and laughter above all! There are just two things to know about our house: We are up a steep-ish driveway with a short step onto the front porch---otherwise it's comfortable inside and we look forward to being together. Secondly, our two bathrooms are upstairs, unfortunately (but our staircase is not steep and has a good handrail) —a ground floor bathroom hasn't been created yet. We hope that it will happen in the next year.

Directions:

We live at 8821 Terrace Drive in El Cerrito.
From San Pablo, drive all the way up Moeser Lane,
cross over Arlington Ave. onto Terrace--the UU Church sign is at the corner there.
Just stay on Terrace Ave. as it curves to the left, (you'll drive past a lot with P G & E power towers),
and Terrace curves Right. Our Driveway will be just ahead of you, on the left. I'll put a sign on the mailbox. Please park on the street, as there's not much space to park up near the house.

Hope to see you on December 14th!
Judy

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY UPDATES

The Board decided that we would not print a new Directory. We will continue to use the **2019-2020 Directory with gold cover** that Ellen Mills and her husband Paul printed. Member information updates will be published in the Newsletter. I have extra copies of the 2019-2020 Directory. Let me know if you need one. **Note Diane Ichiyasu and Susan Walenta have new addresses. See below.**

All changes to date:

CORBIN, ROSEMARY **474 Western Drive, Richmond 94801, (510) 520-0404**

DADZIE, MEIGAN **PO Box 7273, Berkeley 94707, greenledger@gmail.com**

ICHIYASU, DIANE **2100 San Pablo Ave Apt 429, Berkeley 94702**

PLAYER, PATRICIA **(707) 603-8518** (new landline phone number)

SOUTO-MARTINEZ, MARTHA (Marty) **marthasoutomartinez@gmail.com** (not marty)

WALENTA, SUSAN **1100 San Pablo Ave #306, Albany 94706**

WEINTRAUB, MARSHA **marsha.weintraub@gmail.com** (email in the directory has an extra "e" at the end of her last name)

PUBLIC POLICY

Amy Hom and Melissa Maceyko, *Directors, Public Policy Committee Co-chairs*, publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org

A SUCCESSFUL 2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Thanks to the many AAUW members who participated in Lobby Days, to those who called or wrote to their legislators and the Governor through our Action Alert Network, and thanks in no small part to the tireless efforts of Kathy Van Osten, our Legislative Advocate, 29 of the 41 bills on our Legislative Agenda made it to the Governor's desk, and 25 of them have been signed into law! **This represents an 86.2% success rate!**

All 3 of our A-priority bills were signed:

- **AB 2843 - Signed into law!** Authored and sponsored by AAUW California and carried by Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris, this bill eliminates cost sharing, including deductibles, from being imposed on any rape survivor seeking medical care following a rape. Countless rape survivors do not seek medical care following their assault because of prohibitive costs. AB 2843 removes the cost barrier, ensuring that survivors can receive the care they need following a traumatic sexual attack.
- **AB 2326 - Signed into law!** Sponsored by AAUW California and authored by Assemblymember David Alvarez, this bill requires the Chancellors of the Community Colleges and the State Universities, and the President of the University of California, to provide an annual report, publicly and orally presented, of their schools' compliance with Title IX.
- **AB 2099 - Signed into law!** Authored by Assemblymembers Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and Kevin McCarty, this bill makes it possible for the District Attorney to pursue felony charges for the posting of information about reproductive health care patients or providers if the posting and subsequent actions result in bodily injury.

2 of our B-priority bills were signed:

- **AB 1790 - Signed into law!** Authored by Assemblymember Damon Connolly, this bill requires the CSU system to report on the implementation of recommendations provided in the California State Auditor report, to ensure Title IX compliance and protections against sexual harassment.
- **AB 1831 - Signed into law!** Authored by Assemblymember Marc Berman, this bill expands the law prohibiting the possession and distribution of material depicting minors performing sexual activities to include AI and computer-generated images.

And very significantly, AB 1955 was signed. This was a C priority bill only because it was added to our Legislative Agenda later in the process.

- **AB 1955 - Signed into law!** This bill, authored by Assemblymember Chris Ward, prohibits public schools from notifying parents if their child uses a different name or pronouns or identifies as a different gender than assigned at birth. **California is the first state in the nation to ban forced outing of transgender students.**

