



Happy New Year 2025!



Special Message from Wendy Wenger

I was asked by Kay Crane several months ago to write about my experiences with sudden serious illness. I want to thank her for that request, now that I am able to put my thoughts into words.

Two years ago, my life was so different. I was running a successful business for over 40 years, taking part in groups like AAUW, business groups and a fishing group. We were able to travel when we wanted to. With one medical diagnosis, it was all over. Those groups had to be dropped. I had to take the lead for my business. Those trips were cancelled. Financial issues started to pop their ugly heads. I seemed to lost "Wendy". I became a care giver while trying to save the business.

I believe the good Lord had something in mind with those diagnoses regarding my husband's health. I started to realize how important my family was. I started keeping more in touch with my 95-year-old aunt, my brother and my eldest cousin. I started concentrating on my husband's health and my close family friends. I pulled myself out the mainstream. I took control of my life re-evaluating everything.

I also had to swallow my pride and ask for financial assistance. Since my work hours were reduced, my business started to hurt. I could not put my full energy into it. My personal pride was being able to help people totally disappeared. Now, I am the one being helped. I realized that standing at the hospital with a Seahawk player next to me. He was the helper and now I was the one being helped.

Since then, my special group of angels are still supporting us. The Lord is still looking over us. That financial assistance is still in place, for now. The business is starting to build since I am able to do what I need to do. My husband is in recovery and doing well. He is back helping with the bookkeeping. Our basic health is good, but we are both tired and still do not do much. We are slowly recovering from our deep dive into financial loss. It might take a few years; but we will do it. We are looking forward to our move to Eastern Washington someday.

I would like to pass on words of wisdom I learned these past two years which changed my life. First, your instincts are important when it comes to your health. You need to trust them. Second, you need to do what you believe in and listen to the doctors. Third, care givers must take care of the themselves or they cannot be of help. Fourth, help is available when you are ready to accept it. Fifth, family and friends are important so do not leave them behind during tough times. Finally, families in these situations must believe in the future. Those positive thoughts will carry you through the rough times. As I told people around me, we were in a rabbit hole going deeper but now we are climbing out slowly and see the future.

Thank you to the members of AAUW for working with me. A special thanks to Kay.

Wendy Wenger, Secretary to the Board

**AAUW PUBLIC
POLICY PRIORITY
ISSUES**

Strong system of Public Education
Equality, Individual Rights and Social Justice for a Diverse Society.
Economic Self-sufficiency for Woman

MISSION

Advancing Gender Equity Through Research, Education and Advocacy

VISION

Equity for all.

VALUES

Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

AAUW FUNDS

The Educational Foundation is one of the largest sources of funding for graduate women in the world awarding millions each year in scholarships.

**LEGAL ADVOCACY
FUND**

(LAF) works to combat sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace.

Highline AAUW theme for 2024-2025 is "Harmony"



Dear Highline Branch Members and Friends:

You are invited to a very special event to meet a representative from Reading Partners. Since reading is a subject close to our hearts, we encourage you to attend.



The meeting will be on **Thursday, January 23**, from 10 am to noon at the United Church of Christ Normandy Park at 19247 1st Ave S, Normandy Park, WA 98148.

Our theme will be **"Harmony in the School"**.



Laura Mariko Marx from Reading Partners will speak for 30-45 minutes and allow time for questions.

Refreshments will be provided by the Board.

Bring a book to exchange.

Please RSVP to Mary Kay Ault at 206-772-4156 or marykayault@msn.com or reply to this email.

Looking forward to seeing you there!



Lobby Day Is January 27th, 2025

The theme for our AAUW-WA January 27 Lobby Day event is "Challenges and Opportunities". Lobby Day is always fascinating and motivating. We will hear from our Olympia lobbyist Nancy Sapiro about pending WA legislation and listen to other inspiring speakers. [Free Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

As AAUW-WA Public Policy Director Sandra Distelhorst has said, "This is not a time to step back but a time to step up our advocacy efforts." The current word among activists is "focus on the local."

What can you do and how can we assist? The week after Lobby Day is the opportunity for you to:

- **meet virtually with your WA legislator(s) or**
- **call your WA legislator(s) and leave a message or talk with the Aide or**
- **send your WA legislator(s) an email (template provided)**

[More specific information about taking these actions and support our public policy team can provide.](#)

Sign the Petition to Add the ERA to the Constitution

Women in the US are still not guaranteed equal rights. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which will update the US Constitution to protect the equality of rights under the law regardless of sex, can be added to the Constitution with one action. The League of Women Voters and the ERA Coalition are urging President Biden to act to ensure that the ERA is published before he leaves office. [You can sign the petition at this link](#) (scroll down to find the form.) More specific information is on our [website](#).

Contributed by AAUW Seattle Branch – The Catalyst Newsletter

Mark your calendar for Lobby Day on Monday, January 27. Free, online via Zoom. [Register using ->this link](#). For more information see the Evergreen Reader on the AAUW Washington State website: <https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/>

AAUW-WA Invites You



We continue our "Fireside Chats" on February 19.

The topic is **Fundraising** Does your branch currently have a successful fundraiser? What tools do you use to sell tickets, advertise, and reach out for sponsors? Come chat, share ideas, or get ideas on how to get started.

Wednesday, February 19, 7 p.m.

Via Zoom, [register using this link.](#)

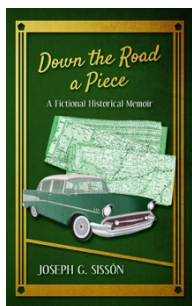
February is...



We are proud to present Gayllord Sisson, our guest speaker for the February 28th branch meeting.

Sisson is a local poet and novelist of short stories. He is a member of the African American Writers' Alliance in Seattle, and a member of the Burien Arts Commission.

He will be featuring his latest works, including his book "Down the Road a Piece



Burien resident Gayllord Sisson goes 'Down the Road a Piece' to tell his stories
by ALIA SINCLAIR

March 9, 2023, Updated March 10, 2023

"A staggering coming of age story that grapples with identity, family, and culture, "Down the Road a Piece" is a scintillating snapshot of how our own self-perception is formed in the petri dish of our surrounding societal narratives.

The B-Town Blog recently sat down with Sisson to learn more about his book and life story. When the idea of self-perception being influenced by culture is mentioned, he tells a story of his brother, a filmmaker who intended to document the culture of a tribe of people in Papua New Guinea."

February is also the American Heart Month - Stay Healthy and





2025 Diversity Calendar & Holidays

January is a month to celebrate the diverse ways in which we communicate and connect with each other. From recognizing the importance of Braille for the visually impaired to honoring cultural and religious celebrations, this month is about understanding and appreciating the various forms of expression that enrich our world.

January 4 – UN: World Braille Day

Celebrates the importance of Braille for the visually impaired.

January 7 – Coptic & Eastern Orthodox Christian: Christmas

Marks the birth of Jesus Christ according to the Julian calendar.

January 14 – Buddhist: Mahayana New Year

Celebrates the Buddhist New Year in Mahayana traditions.

January 20 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Honors the civil rights leader and his contributions to equality.

January 27 – International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust

Remembers the victims of the Holocaust and promotes Holocaust education.

February is dedicated to celebrating Black History Month, a time to honor the contributions, achievements, and rich history of Black Americans. This month also includes significant events that promote harmony and awareness across various cultural and health-related spectrums.

February 1 – UN: World Interfaith Harmony Week

Promotes harmony between all people regardless of their faith.

February 2 – Pagan and Wiccan: Imbolc

Celebrates the beginning of spring and the goddess Brigid.

February 4 – World Cancer Day

Raises awareness of cancer prevention, detection, and treatment.

February 17 – Washington's Birthday (Presidents' Day)

Honors the birthday of George Washington, the first U.S. President.

February 26 – Hindu: Maha Shivaratri

A major Hindu festival celebrating Lord Shiva.

March is dedicated to celebrating Women's History Month, a time to recognize the contributions and achievements of women throughout history. This month also features important observances across different faiths and cultures, emphasizing the importance of equality and diversity.

March 1 – Islamic: Ramadan

A holy month of fasting, prayer, and reflection for Muslims.

March 5 – Christian: Ash Wednesday

Marks the beginning of Lent, a season of fasting and prayer.

March 8 – International Women's Day

Celebrates the achievements of women and calls for gender equality.

March 14 – Hindu: Holi

The festival of colors, celebrating the arrival of spring.

March 14 – Sikh: Hola Mohalla

A Sikh festival featuring martial arts, poetry, and community gatherings.



AAUW Highline Branch Zoom Board Meeting
January 3, 2025 – 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Present: Emily Hitchen, Kay Crane, Mary Kay Ault and Anneliese Ellerton.

Absent: Teri Riordan, Jean Munro and Wendy Wenger

Kay called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm, wishing everybody a happy new year.

January meeting plans include a speaker from Reading Partners. We don't yet have confirmation of a meeting place or date. Emily will follow up with UCC Church.

February meeting plans include the poet Gaylloyd Sisson as a speaker for Black History Month. Wesley a possible meeting place, the 5th floor club room our preference. One of our members who lives at Wesley would have to make the reservation, if possible. Dates considered include February 21, 27 or 28. (*Update: Wendy has confirmed that Sisson will be speaker on February 28th pm*)

March meeting plans – Normandy Park UCC Church seems to be our first choice. International Women's Day (March 8) has been suggested to provide a topic, with each member bringing a book about women from around the world. A book exchange is a possibility.

Mary Kay will look into the PSSC as a possible meeting place for the future.

Reminder – AAUW WA annual meeting is the weekend of April 26 and 27. (*To be confirmed by Emily in the Evergreen Leader newsletter.*)

Current ideas for a May meeting include a garden tour, but no plans have been made.

New business – our web page is being updated. Emily will invite Lynn Zachow to work on it with Anneliese and Jean Munro.

Lobby Day is January 27.

Respectfully submitted, Kay Crane



Highline Branch Member News

To Our Highline Branch Members who may be feeling "Under the Weather", recovering from illness, injuries or surgery.

If you know of anyone who needs some well wishes or cheering up, please let us know so we can send a card.

Highline Branch Leadership Team

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Jean Munro, Anneliese Ellerton



January and February Birthdays

*Linda Hagen 1/18
Jennifer Rydberg 1/20
Kay Crane 1/30*

*Anneliese Ellerton 2/13
Kathie Walker 2/15
Bonnie Verhunce 2/21*

If we have missed anyone's birthday, please email Anneliese at ellerton13@gmail.com



Highline Board Zoom Meeting - **Friday, February 7, at 1:00 pm**

January 23, 2025. Theme: "Harmony in the Schools". Laura Mariko Marx from Reading Partners will be the speaker. Meeting time: 10 am – noon. Location: Normandy Park United Church of Christ. Invitations will be emailed to members.

February 28, 2025: Meeting time will be some time in the afternoon. Wendy will arrange meeting date and time with Gaylloyd Sisson as speaker. Wesley Gardens 5th floor clubroom confirmed.

March 2025: Date and time to be decided. Possible location will be Normandy Park UCC. International Women's Day (March 8) will be the theme. This would be a special program for International Women's Day members bring books featuring women from around the world.

May 2025: Date and time to be decided. Garden fieldtrip: Theme "Harmony with Nature" – Zenith Holland Nursery, Burien Huckleberry Gardens, or gardens at Renton Technical College (RTC) are possible locations.

April 26th, 2025, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm: AAUW-WA Annual Meeting – per Zoom

Seattle Branch **Saturday, February 15, 2025, at 10:00AM - 12:00PM** - Online: Free Registration Required - [Zoom Link](#)



West Seattle & Points South online interest group: Several of our Highline members have joined the above group, which meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 10 am. The current theme is "Writing triggers". Next meeting is on **Tuesday, February 11, at 10:00 am**. If you are interested in joining this virtual coffee club, email Barbara Sando at barbarasando@yahoo.com

Lobby Day – **Monday, January 27, 2025** – Online via Zoom

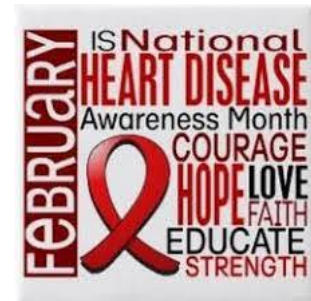
Annual meeting hosted by our Public Policy Team, featuring our lobbyist and review of bills and priorities. Meet others from across the state and talk directly with lobbyist and office holders.

For more information regarding AAUW-WA events, see *The Evergreen Leader* at

<https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/files/2025/01/Evergreen-Leader-January-2025.pdf>

Yes, February is American Heart Month in 2025.

It's a time to raise awareness about heart health and cardiovascular disease.



What's happening in 2025?

- National Wear Red Day

Friday, February 7, 2025, is National Wear Red Day. People wear red to show support for heart health and to raise awareness about heart disease and stroke.

- Walk With A Doc

Some communities hold walks during American Heart Month where participants can learn about heart health and ask questions.

How can you promote heart health?

- Eat healthy: Eat whole foods that are low in trans-fat, saturated fat, sodium, and added sugar.
- Exercise: Get moving and try to be active.
- Manage conditions: Take medications as prescribed by your doctor to manage conditions like high blood pressure and cholesterol.
- Stop smoking: If you smoke, try to quit.
- Educate your family: Make healthy food choices and encourage your family to be active.

Where can you learn more?

- Visit the American Heart Association website for information on heart health.
- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for information on lifestyle choices and other ways to lead a healthier life. (*Google*)

Now indulge in some heart healthy desserts!

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/heart-healthy-desserts>





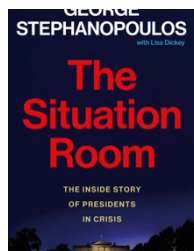
Morning and Afternoon Book Group Discussion Meetings

2nd Friday – Mornings at 9:30 am unless otherwise specified *

February 14, 9:30 am - *The Situation Room* by George Stephanopoulos, Discussion: Carol Mohler, Host: Kathie Walker
March 14, 9:30 am – *Good Night, Irene* by Luis Alberto Urrea, Discussion: Mary Kay Ault, Host TBD
April 11, 9:30 am – *The Confidante* by Christopher Gorham, Discussion: Jane Emerson, Host TBD
May 9, 9:30 am – *True Tales of Puget Sound* by Dorothy Wilhelm, Discussion: Anneliese Ellerton, Host: Judy Storey
June 13, 9:30 am – *The Women* by Kristen Hannah, Discussion: Kathie Walker, Host: Kathy Linnell

1st Monday - Afternoons at 2:30 pm unless otherwise specified *

February 3, 2:30 pm – *Her Hidden Genius* by Marie Benedict, Host: Anneliese Ellerton
March 3, 2:30 pm – *The Exiles* by Christine Baker Kline, Host: Kathy Fitch
April 7, 2:30 pm – *These Precious Days* by Ann Patchett, Host: Carol Erickson
May 5, 2:30 pm – *Northwest Trolls: The Way of the Bird King* by Thomas Dambo, Host: Janis Jacobson
June 2, 2:30 pm – *Underland: A Deep Time Journey* by Robert MacFarlane, Host Emily Hitchens



The Situation Room: The Inside Story of Presidents in Crisis, by George Stephanopoulos

George Stephanopoulos, former senior advisor to President Clinton and for more than 20 years anchor of This Week and co-anchor of Good Morning America, recounts the crises that decided the course of history, from the place 12 presidents made their highest-pressure the White House Situation Room.

No room better defines American power and its role in the world than the White House Situation Room. And yet, none is more shrouded in secrecy and mystery. Created under President Kennedy, the Sit Room has been the epicenter of crisis management for presidents for more than six decades. Time and again, the decisions made within the Sit Room complex affect the lives of every person on this planet. Detailing close calls made and disasters narrowly averted, THE SITUATION ROOM will take readers through dramatic turning points in a dozen presidential administrations, THE SITUATION ROOM is the definitive, past-the-security-clearance look at the room where it happened, and the people—the famous and those you've never heard of—who have made history within its walls. *Goodreads*



Her Hidden Genius by Marie Benedict

Rosalind Franklin has always been an outsider—brilliant, but different. Whether working at the laboratory she adored in Paris or toiling at a university in London, she feels closest to the science, those unchanging laws of physics and chemistry that guide her experiments. When she is assigned to work on DNA, she believes she can unearth its secrets.

Rosalind knows if she just takes one more X-ray picture—one more after thousands—she can unlock the building blocks of life. Never again will she have to listen to her colleagues complain about her, especially Maurice Wilkins who'd rather conspire about genetics with James Watson and Francis Crick than work alongside her.

Then it finally happens—the double helix structure of DNA reveals itself to her with perfect clarity. But what unfolds next, Rosalind could have never predicted.

Marie Benedict's powerful new novel shines a light on a woman who sacrificed her life to discover the nature of our very DNA, a woman whose world-changing contributions were hidden by the men around her but whose relentless drive advanced our understanding of humankind. *Goodreads*

February 2024**Black History & American Heart Month**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Jan 27 Lobby Day			Jan 30  Kay Crane		1
2 Groundhog Day	3 PM Book Group 2:30pm	4 Rosa Parks Day	5	6	7 Highline Board Meeting 1:00 pm National Wear Red Day	8
9 Super Bowl	10	11 Seattle Coffee Group 10:00 am	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13  Anneliese Ellerton	14 AM Book group 9:3.0 am Valentines Day	15  Kathie Walker Seattle Branch Meeting 10am
16	17 President's Day	18	19	20 Love your Pet Day	21  Bonnie Verhunce	22 George Washington's Birthday
23	24	25	26 National Letter to an Elder Day	27	28 Highline Branch Meeting - pm	

AAUW Highline Branch Newsletter
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