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**October 2024**

**The polls open at 7 am in 28 days.**



**Don't hit the snooze alarm.**

Dear <<First Name>>,  
Welcome to the *California Connection*, the monthly missive sent to every member from your state organization for a quick and informal read of things to know and do in AAUW!

## **Things to Know**





Bigger is not always better. Consider loan payments, overgrown zucchinis, and your hand after a bee sting. But in the case of Speech Trek, it is. This year, the prizes are—you guessed it—bigger. Students in the state finals will be competing for awards of \$2500, \$2000, \$1000, and two honorable mentions of \$500 each. That's worth the sweaty palms. The 2024-2025 topic concerns climate change and its impact on women. The details and necessary forms for your branch to participate are [HERE](#); the deadline to sign up is November 18th. This will be the final year for the Speech Trek program. Make it a big one.



100! It's an ugly number when it's the daytime temperature. It's a lovely number when it's on U.S. currency. For us, it's the rewarding number of branches that sent girls to Tech Trek in 2024. That means nearly every branch in the state committed time, energy, and a boatload of \$100 bills to give 800 girls a once-in-a-lifetime experience at an in-person or virtual camp. They ate generally-identifiable cafeteria food and slept in curiously-sized dorm beds or Zoomed in wearing flannel pajama bottoms emblazoned with kitty cats. And thanks to Program Director Mary Isaac and more than 250 staff, they learned, laughed, and leaned into their interest in STEM. How many \$100 bills was that worth? Priceless. But you knew we'd say that.



We put our money where our mouth is. So far, AAUW has granted more than \$146 million to 14,000 women and nonprofit organizations to pursue work that will drive social change. That's almost as much as the receipt from your last trip to Costco®. This year's national Fellowships & Grants program offers more grant opportunities than you can shake a stick at. (Let us briefly digress to muse on the possible origins of that strange phrase. Jot down your thoughts for a group share later.) Details and applications for funding are [HERE](#). Apply for yourself or pass it on by November 15th. And, yes, you DO need that 55-gallon drum of hamburger relish on aisle 84.



## Things to Do





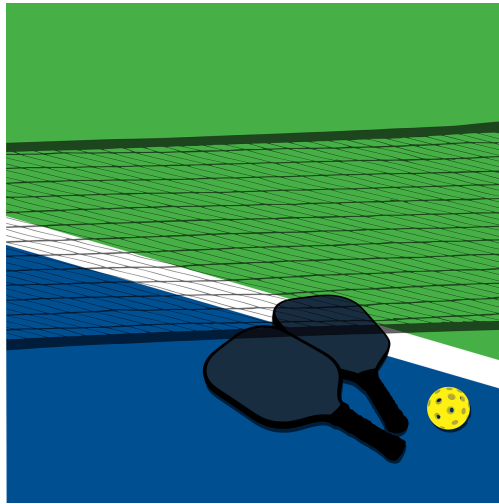
Remember that flush of relief when a teacher canceled a test? Well, sit down for this! The California DMV has discontinued the written test for most drivers wishing to renew their license. That's right. You no longer have to choose if the distance to safely pass a bicyclist is (a) 3 feet, (b) 5 feet, (c) 92.6 feet, or (d) the square root of 413. What does this mean for you? It means you can stop studying the 84-page Drivers' Handbook and spend your time reading your branch newsletter instead! It's a treasure chest. Open it. You have no more excuses and you will not be tested.

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2025

*Fahrenheit 451*. 1984. *Area 51*. *The Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf*. Should we be wary of titles with numbers in them? Today, people are talking about another title with a number: *Project 2025*, the 900+ page blueprint for a conservative administration proposed by the think tank The Heritage Foundation. Our Public Policy team explains and analyzes *Project 2025* and its potential impact on AAUW priorities in a webinar on Tuesday, October 22nd, at 7 pm, hosted by the California Online Branch. What are *Project 2025*'s proposed initiatives for education, Title IX, reproductive rights, and gender equity? Is *Project 2025* the Big Bad Wolf? Register [HERE](#) to decide.

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If you struggle with the incomprehensible scorekeeping in Pickleball and your criss-cross applesauce days of jump rope are over, you might consider an easier activity. Last month, we described the state's peer group meetings. These allow branch leaders who have similar jobs to share updates and best practices in their areas, such as Public Policy, DEI, Communications, etc. (Please consult your notes.) Since we know AAUW types want to know EVERYTHING about EVERYTHING, we are opening up those meetings to anyone who wants to attend. Just check the state calendar on the website [HERE](#) for meeting details and contact the chair for the Zoom link. Then drop in. Easy-peasy. You don't need to remember who's serving.

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**See you next month.**

**We'll know who our next president will be.**

**There will be a lot to talk about.**



AAUW's mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.  
[AAUW.org](http://AAUW.org)

AAUW California's mission: AAUW California facilitates California branches in meeting the vision and mission of AAUW by providing programs, education and resources.  
[www.aauw-ca.org](http://www.aauw-ca.org)



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