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February 2025

Our hearts are a-flutter.



Or is it Afib.

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

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There's just no way to make this topic light-hearted. The catastrophic LA fires have touched and sobered us all. We may know someone in the affected areas, or lived through a wildfire ourselves, or just looked out our window at our glorious trees and said, "Uh-oh." Your state leadership and four AAUW branches in the LA area have been working to identify members whose homes may have been lost or smoke-damaged. We know you can't help rebuild a living room, but you can show support by sending a gift card to help fellow members meet their more immediate needs. Consider places like grocery stores, gas stations, Target®, Amazon, or all-purpose bank cards such as Visa and Mastercard®. Please do not send cash or checks. Send them to our state office to be distributed by the local branches coordinating the effort:

AAUW California
PO Box 160067
Sacramento, CA 95816-0067

Mark the envelope **ATTN: LAF** (Los Angeles Fires).
Now, go pack your "go bag."



What's a Bananagram? Nothing. It's just the goofy code word the state communications team used as the name of the working draft of a new Tech Trek website. And now that delightful moniker is gone forever, lost like the Brontosaurus, because, unlike the Brontosaurus, the new webpages are LIVE! The new [Tech Trek site](#) is the go-to for teachers, parents, students, donors, and Tech Trek Branch Coordinators who want to know what Tech Trek is, how to send girls, where the heck the right forms are, and more. All in one place! Just click on each section to learn more. It's like peeling a . . . you know what. Tell your friends; tell your schools; tell people who like to give money; tell the Tooth Fairy.





How flattering to have your boss urgently ask you for a meeting to help with a problem. How special to have your bestie ask you confidentially for a small loan. How empowering to have the AAUW president ask if you can spare a few minutes for a phone call. The problem is: those may not be the real people who sent you those emails. Don't feel unworthy. Email scams are rampant. Hackers hijack contact lists and pretend to be people you trust. But how can you tell? First, **be suspicious** of unusual requests. If you don't even know the president of AAUW, it's likely they don't need your advice, brilliant as it may be. The email is probably fake. Second, **hover your mouse over the sender's name to see their email address**. If it's yourbestie@alligatortraining.com, it's probably fake. Third, **check out the grammar and spelling**. If you see phrases like "Good friend, help with problem big," it's probably fake. What to do? Delete anything suspicious. Change your password. Do not reply. Do not click on any links. Do not open any attachments. Do not bother notifying AAUW, as there is nothing the organization can do. Do not pass Go. Do not collect \$200 (Well, maybe that would be okay.)

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Things to Do

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Our advocacy efforts are guided by the member-approved Public Policy Priorities (shortened to PPPs, which is sure to elicit giggles from kindergarten boys). These are reviewed on a biennial basis. We hear you thinking, "Oh gosh, does that mean twice in one year, or once every other year, or only in odd-numbered years if corn crops are good?" Don't bother to Google it. It means once every two years. The state Public Policy Committee reached out to all members earlier for input, carefully considered it, and will be presenting proposed updates to the PPPs (stop laughing!) for 2025-2027. YOU can approve them (or not) on the April ballot when you will also elect state board

officers and directors. Don't let this chance to be an "influencer" pass you by, since your future on TikTok is questionable.

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It took the Oxford English Dictionary editors five years just to reach the word "ant." It took them another 65 years to produce the first complete edition. Sometimes good things take time, like compound interest and ripe avocados. Although it took a little time, we're letting you know that the videos from most of our AAUW-funded Grant and Fellowship recipients from California are now posted [HERE](#). Watch these inspiring women explain their work on class consciousness or DNA or pique your interest in low-power tunable multiferroic flux sources. Urge your branch leaders to schedule a speaker for a presentation. And since we got you thinking about the OED, why not try reading it one word a day? It's estimated it would take more than 1,000 years. No amount of clean living or Botox® will help you.

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Some of us are old; some of us are not. Some of us can do bird calls; some of us cannot. Some of us are on social security; some of us are not. But all of us need to understand how social security programs work for women. AAUW National is hosting *What Every Woman Should Know About Social Security* on March 25th at 1 pm ET (10 am for us). Register [HERE](#) to learn about retirement, disability, spousal and survivor benefits, and more so you can make confident decisions. This will be useful, no matter what stage of life you're in. As for doing bird calls, it's a useless talent. But give it a go [HERE](#).

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See you in March. Beware the Ides of!



AAUW's mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

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



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