



# American Association of University Women



Gig Harbor Branch

FEBRUARY 2016

## Gig Harbor Branch Board

### President

Karen Anderson  
253-509-0781

### Program Co-VPs

Pat Berger  
253-851-2534  
Catherine Luria  
253-225-2068

### Membership Co-VPs

Kathleen Larson  
720-352-0537  
Liz Svigals  
253-530-3456  
Patty Nelson  
253-857-7900

### Finance VP

Nancy Williams  
253-779-4666

### Secretary

Barbara Schmit  
253-549-0814

### Scholarships

Phyllis Davis  
253-853-4616

### Newsletter Editor

Martha Shellenberger  
253-851-7464  
marthashellen@comcast.net

## February GH Branch Meeting

**This program is tentative. Look for future emails.**

Saturday Feb. 20, 2016

10am-Noon

### Music and Music Education

Agnus Dei Lutheran Church

10511 Peacock Hill Ave. Gig Harbor

Youth Symphony Orchestra to perform and discussion of music education in the Peninsula School District.

## Upcoming Events-Mark your Calendar!

**Saturday March 19, 2016** GH Branch Meeting 10- Noon  
Harbor History Museum-High School Grad. Rates & Post HS Education in the Peninsula School District.

**Saturday April 16, 2016** GH Branch Meeting 10-Noon  
Harbor History Museum-AAUW Business Meeting, elections and State Convention Report

**Saturday May 21, 2016** GH Branch Meeting 10-Noon  
Harbor History Museum-Mental Health Update for Pierce County

## In Case You Missed It-CHOCOLATE & POETRY

The January 16th Branch Meeting was tasty indeed with treats from Trop's Chocolates and the Gig Harbor Candy Co.



Heather Trop  
Photo by Martha Shellenberger 2016

Heather Trop introduced us to Trop's Chocolate a new company in the Gig Harbor area. She said they have been in the chocolate business for 35 years but in another location. Initially she and her husband opened a bakery and, to add variety to their products, her husband began making chocolate truffles rolled in cocoa which became an instant hit. They visited Gig Harbor and decided to open a wholesale chocolate business near the Narrows Bridge and six months ago they opened their retail store in the same location.

They use only *Belgian* Chocolate and local *Meadowsweet* dairy products and do not use any GMO or corn syrup products. They also use Valhalla coffee, from a

local Tacoma roaster, in their chocolate sauces and mochas. They make their own graham crackers and offer many gluten-free items. **Boxes made of chocolate are another one of their specialties, which they can personalize and fill with handmade chocolates.** They also offer some bakery items and teas from Arizona.



Theobroma cacao tree  
Source: Wikipedia


She told us that chocolate is a fruit that grows on the trunk of the Theobroma cacao tree. The seeds of the tree are cocoa, which are then fermented, roasted and conched for twelve hours by Trop's. It is a labor-intensive process.



Heather Trop showing one of Trop's chocolate boxes and a variety of their handmade chocolates.

Photo by Martha Shellenberger 2016

Their store and chocolate factory is located at 3303 Jahn Ave. NW Suite 235 in Gig Harbor, near the Narrows Bridge. They are open Monday through Saturday from 7:00a.m. to 6:00p.m.

**Trop's Chocolates**  
Heather Trop - Chocolatier  
heather@tropschocolates.com  
Cell: 253-238-7771  
3303 Jahn Ave. NW, Sweet 235, Gig Harbor, WA 98335  
Wholesale: 253-313-5805 | www.tropschocolates.com

## In Case You Missed It-CHOCOLATE & POETRY-continued



Michelle Johnson

Photo by Martha Shellenberger 2016

Michelle Johnson treated us to candy from The Gig Harbor Candy Company. The owner, Patti Blevans, uses recipes that are generations old. They are a three person operation making candy in small batches.

Toffee is their specialty which is offered in various delicious flavors. A specialty item is their *Tiger Butter*, a smooth white chocolate and peanut butter toffee. In November and December they offer *Peppermint Bark*, a seasonal holiday favorite. In the spring they offer *Coffee Toffee*, made with Ohana Coffee. They use nuts from Spokane and no GMO products.

They sell their toffee in a variety of locations, including Ace Hardware, the Puyallup Farmers Market, and possibly the Gig Harbor Farmers Market. In addition, they ship their product throughout the US which may be purchased on their website.



*Simply the Best!*

253.380.0505

info@gigharborcandy.com

[www.gigharborcandy.com](http://www.gigharborcandy.com)

**Patti Blevins**

- English Toffee•
- Tiger Butter•
- Espresso Bark•
- Peppermint Bark•

Michelle showing Gig Harbor Candy Company's candy varieties.

Photo by Martha Shellenberger 2016

## In Case You Missed It-CHOCOLATE & POETRY-continued

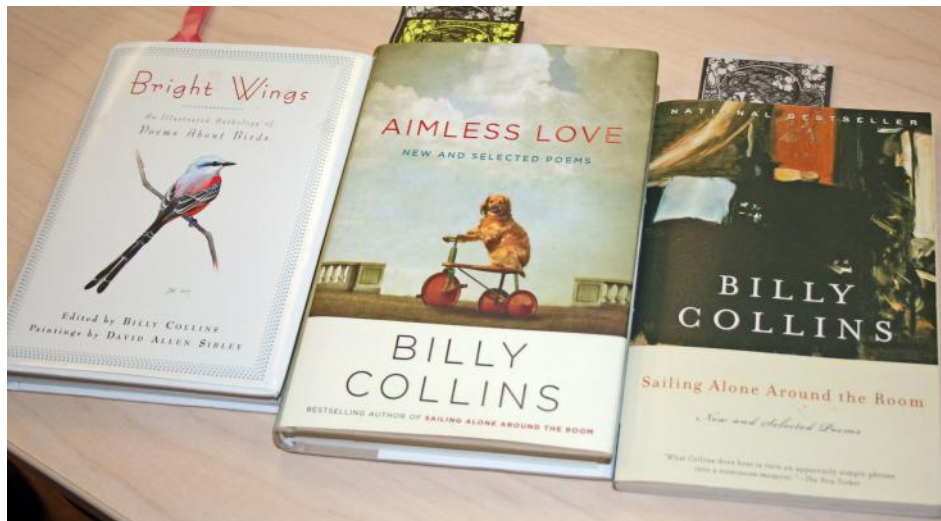
The third portion of our program was a TED talk of the poet Billy Collins reading two of his poems.



**William James "Billy" Collins** (born March 22, 1941) is an American poet, appointed as Poet Laureate of the United States from 2001 to 2003.<sup>[1][2]</sup> He is a Distinguished Professor at Lehman College of the City University of New York and is the Senior Distinguished Fellow of the Winter Park Institute, Florida. Collins was recognized as a Literary Lion of the New York Public Library (1992) and selected as the New York State Poet for 2004 through 2006. He is (in 2015) a teacher in the MFA program at Stony Brook Southampton.

Source: Wikipedia

Mr. Collins has written several books including *Aimless Love*, a collection of his poems.



# AAUW GH Calendar

## February 2016

**Bon Appetit- Tuesday, February 16th at 6 pm.** Rosemary hosts Sage at Marlene Buffington's house with co-host Mary Williams. Parsley hosts Thyme at Sandy Overton's house with co-host Gwyneth Nightingale. For more information call Sue Engen at (253) 265-1677 or Diane Edison at 851-1056.



**Evening Book Group—Monday, February 22nd, 6:30 pm refreshments; 7:00 Meeting Time..** Our book for February is the **End of Your Life Book Club by Will Swalbe**. Martha Shellenberger will lead the discussion. Martha and Julie Buffington will provide refreshments. For more information please phone Sue Hines (253) 761-5080 or Salli Montgomery (253) 857-8057.

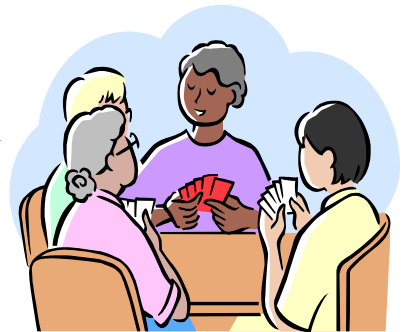
**Who Done It (Mystery Book Group)—Tuesday February 9th, 10:30am.** We will read Joseph Finder. For more information please call Carol Robinson at (253) 265-6141.

**Bridge-Day—** Our group meets on the third Tuesday of each month in a member's home for an afternoon of bridge. Please call June Lane (253) 851-4059 for more information.

**Bridge-Evening—**The evening bridge group meets on the 4th Thursday of the month. Please call Mary Williams (253) 509-0524 or Bev Storkman (253) 851-2402 to confirm a date and time and reserve a seat at the table.

**Lunch Bunch—**The Lunch Bunch meets at 12:30 pm every second Wednesday of the month at the Inn of Gig Harbor. Everyone is invited. No need to call ahead.

**Palette to Palate** is on hiatus for a few months due to waning interest. If an exhibit looks intriguing, contact Ellen Lowrie at (253) 884-2610 and we'll see if there is any interest in attending.



### Happy Birthday to members celebrating February birthdays.

Catherine Sleavin	2-02
Michelle Meredith	2-07
Claudia Thompson	2-08
Martha Shellenberger	2-14
Carol Robinson	2-23
Barbara Schmit	2-28





## Gig Harbor Branch-Announcements

**Newsletter Deadline: February 22nd for the March 2016 newsletter.** Send your articles and pictures to marthashellen@comcast.net. Remember to include last names, locations, dates and times for the information you send.

### Membership Directory Changes

**Please make the following additions and changes to your directory:**

**New Member:**

Arlene Brown  
2710 88th Street Court NW  
Gig Harbor, WA 98332  
Cell: 415) 999-8287  
Work: (360) 476-0166  
[captarlenebrown@gmail.com](mailto:captarlenebrown@gmail.com)  
College: San Francisco State University – BA Business Administration  
College: University of Ottawa – MBA  
Birthdate: March 1974

**Mercer, Sybil**-new email: [syb22mer@outlook.net](mailto:syb22mer@outlook.net)

Foreign Policy Association



**Great Decisions** is a program sponsored by the Foreign Policy Association. They supply a manual with pro and con views of world wide problems with a brief historical background. There are eight topics for 2016: Middle East Alliances, The Rise of ISIS, The

Future of Kurdistan, Migration, The Koreas, The United Nations, Climate Change and, Cuba and the US.

There are three discussion groups in Gig Harbor, one meeting at Carol Robinson's home on consecutive Friday mornings beginning Feb. 26th at 10:30 am. Another meets at the home of Mary Lou Panks every other Wednesday evening beginning March 9th. The third is coordinated by Janet MacDonald and will meet at the United Methodist Church, 7400 Pioneer Way, GH, beginning April 7th on consecutive Thursdays at 1:00 pm.

If you are interested in joining one of these groups call the coordinator for that group: Carol (253-265-6141), Mary Lou (253-514-8025) or Janet (253-720-8259). Discussion materials may be purchased from Carol or on the website [www.fpa.org](http://www.fpa.org).

For further information about Great Decisions, go to: [www.fpa.org](http://www.fpa.org) and click on the Great Decisions tab.



Each month we feature a member or two, highlighting their accomplishments and interests. This month we are featuring **Pat Berger**.

### **Pat Berger**



Pat Berger grew up in the Los Angeles area and studied languages at Western State University where she focused on Spanish and German. During her undergraduate studies, she traveled to Mexico and Central America. She became fluent in Spanish while pursuing a Masters in Education at Seattle Pacific University and the University of Washington. She taught Spanish at Sumner High School for thirty years before she retired.

She met her husband, Thomas, while working a summer job as a Park Leader for Metropolitan Parks. They moved to Gig Harbor to be “in-between” her husband’s job in Bremerton and her job in Sumner. After Thomas died in 1991, AAUW member Linda Glein invited her to AAUW Book Club and she was hooked. Pat said she has been a Board Member “forever” and was Past President from 2009-2011. She currently is Co-VP for Programs. She has supported womens’ causes since she was a young woman and worked on the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970’s.

Pat is passionate about vegetable gardening and grows anything that will grow in her garden. Besides eggplant and artichokes, she also grows raspberries, beans, and salad greens.

Another of Pat’s passions is traveling and her most recent travels took her to Mexico, the Philippines, and Guatemala where she loved seeing the Mayan ruins and learning about Mayan culture and history. She has a trip planned to Tuscany where she will stay in a villa. She said she is practicing her Italian and finds it an easy language to learn. Another upcoming trip is with her baseball-loving sister and niece to a World Series game.

Pat continues to be an avid reader and is a member of the Evening Book Group. She used to read a lot of science fiction, and said her favorite SciFi author is Isaac Asimov, but now enjoys reading other genres.

## CAROL STOKES UPDATE

Carol Stoke's husband, Everard, recently sent an email with an update about Carol.

Carol is feeling and doing well. To recap, after being diagnosed with AML (Acute Myeloma Leukemia) in June, 2015, she underwent two rounds of chemotherapy in July and September 2015 to treat the disease. After a period of preparation, 60 days ago, she underwent a stem cell transplant, to replace her immune system with the stem cells of a matching donor. She is two-thirds through the critical 100-day period that it normally takes for the donor cells to merge and replace her chemotherapy-weakened and compromised system with one that can function in a "normal" environment.

Her medical provider is the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance (SCCA) a consortium integrating the work of the University of Washington Medicine, Seattle Children's Hospital and Fred Hutchinson Research Center. It has gained national recognition as the country's fifth leading facility and services patients from all over the country and the world. The SCCA has pioneered numerous medical innovations and clinical trials and Carol is in one of the studies. The Seattle Cancer Care Alliance has been superb in their management of the restorative process after cancer which is real-time management of Carol's body functionality and administering any corrective medications to counter abnormal readings. It is an intricate balancing act between allowing her weakened immune system to be replaced by the donor's immune system through the donated stem cells while protecting her body from threats and diseases.

Our typical clinic day consists of five hours of blood draws, to monitor body processes with lab analysis, intravenous infusions, medicine adjustments and visits with supporting medical and support staffs. The SCCA support staff includes physical therapy, dietitians, social workers, chaplains as well as the medical resources of the labs, dental, and research facilities. She also exercises, monitors her food intake, and general condition. We try to live as normally as possible under the circumstances while avoiding crowded places, unsanitary conditions and individuals that may be ill. We are also getting to know the Seattle area a little better.

We are staying in a one bedroom apartment in Seattle (Pete Gross House), a residence of SCCA that specifically creates an environment suitable for immune suppressed individuals. The house makes it possible to follow the stringent cleanliness and food preparation required for those with compromised immune system individuals. The support includes social events and a shuttle service to the clinic that is about a half mile from the clinic.

At this point of the recovery we are focusing on getting back into physical shape, to increase strength, stamina, and body functioning, nutrition, and of course the aspects of inner healing. During the final third of this period, we are beginning to transition and ween ourselves from the clinic. We are hopeful to be back home in about 6 weeks or so – depending on the medical circumstance. Our focus is a return to "normalcy" and weening ourselves from the medical cocoon that has been wrapped around us. We will keep visiting the clinic as needed, and as we become more independent, we will visit less frequently as time goes on.

Carol is working up to get back to her "Y" buddies who have been a vigorous cheering club. In fact her exercising three times per week has held her in good stead through the process. Because of the physical and mental drain of fighting the disease, sedentary nature of the hospitalization, and other factors, Carol's conditioning diminished to having to use a walker for support.

Overall, we have been busy, but it's a "good busy." However, we would be remiss without thanking you all for the support you have provided that facilitates Carol's recovery. Life happens when you are not looking and one is never really prepared for the preverbal MACK truck that comes your way. However in response we have found most useful is acceptance and adaptation to new circumstance. Our take is that it is not in the situation but how we respond to the situation that we find out about ourselves. Do we respond with anger, fear, acceptance, love, denial, or hatred? While we did not knowingly invite the circumstances, we do not detest it; but in a strange way are thankful for the experience that stimulated growth and opened us up to totally new experiences of life.

The vicarious learning experience has been astounding, not only of the medical process but of meeting an incredible diverse set of talented people who are dedicated to healing. Looking around at the faces of the new patients, the steadfast dedication of the staff, making new friends and getting to know the long-time patients like Carol.

Carol is somewhat of a rock star and pioneer of sorts. To date in this facility, she is the oldest person who has been given a transplant. Several brave doctors had to go to bat for her in order that we be given this opportunity, fighting prejudices about older people. Other patients were summarily dismissed for age as a matter of course, however Carol's physical condition, emotional state and drive held her in high regard to be offered this life saving opportunity. She has proved the viability of older persons as stem cell transplant recipients. We are sure that the medical protocols they tailored for her will be studied and refined for senior patients after her. That in itself has made the journey worthwhile.

In summary one of the greatest aspects is getting to know the providers as individuals as they administer to our needs. This includes both in and outside the hospital and our friends coast to coast who are picking up our mail, sending care packages, giving us a lift when needed, or sending welcomed emails and phone calls to Carol.

So we most respectfully thank you.

Mr. and Ms. Carol





## Gig Harbor Branch-Public Policy

Julie Buffington, Public Policy Chair

(253) 267-1066

[rjbuffington@comcast.net](mailto:rjbuffington@comcast.net)

2016 AAUW Lobby Day in Olympia was very interesting and informative. Martha Shellenberger, Pat Berger, Marlene Buffington, Karen Drum and I learned about Reproductive Choices and Chances in 2016, the Gender Wage Gap, and priority bills for women and issues in the Washington Legislature. In the afternoon, we met briefly with each of the three legislators from the 26<sup>th</sup> district, Senator Jan Angel and Representatives Jesse Young and Michelle Caldier. The meetings were cordial and upbeat. We discussed common concerns and made them aware of AAUW's legislative priorities.

Top issues for this legislature include the McLeary decision and planning for funding of basic education in Washington State, charter schools funding, bathroom rules/transgender issues, minimum wages, equal pay, and standards for paid sick days. A few of the priority bills for women are:

HB 1646/SB5630 Enacting the Equal Pay Opportunity Act by amending and enhancing enforcement of the Equal Pay Act and protecting worker communications about wages and employment opportunities;

HB 1356/SB5306 Establishing Minimum Standards for Sick and Safe Leave; and

HB 1355/SB 5285 Increasing the Minimum Hourly Wage to Twelve Dollars over Four Years.

You can follow the progress of these and other bills by accessing the Washington State Legislature homepage at <http://leg.wa.gov/>

This website contain all kinds of helpful information about the Washington State House and Senate along with links to email forms so you can easily contact your senator and representatives. Click on DETAILS and then BILL SPONSORSHIP to see the bills that your legislators are sponsoring. You can also see the Representatives voting record by clicking on VOTING RECORD.

AAUW Lobby Day is always a great learning experience. Consider attending next year.



## AAUW's ¡Adelante! Book Recommendations

¡Adelante! books help to open dialogues on women, diversity, and change.

*Disgruntled: A Novel* by Asali Solomon, 2001–02 AAUW American Fellow

Kenya Curtis is only 8 years old, but she knows that she's different. It's not because she's black — most of the other students in the fourth-grade class at her West Philadelphia elementary school are, too. Maybe it's because she celebrates Kwanzaa, or because she's forbidden from reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Maybe it's because she calls her father "Baba" instead of "Daddy." What Kenya does know is that her difference is connected to what her Baba calls "the shame of being alive."

Effortlessly funny and achingly poignant, Asali Solomon's long-awaited debut novel follows Kenya from West Philadelphia to the suburbs, from public school to private, from childhood through adolescence, as she grows increasingly disgruntled by her inability to find any place or thing or person that feels like home. A coming-of-age tale, a portrait of Philadelphia in the late '80s and early '90s, an examination of the impossible double binds of race, *Disgruntled* is a novel about the desire to rise above the limitations of the narratives we're given and the painful struggle to craft fresh ones we can call our own.

AAUW Newsletter

Gig Harbor Branch

P.O. Box 2705

Address Service Requested

**Dated Material**

AAUW DIVERSITY STATEMENT: In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

Show your thanks by supporting the following businesses that help support the newsletter:

**Bella's Kitchen and Home**  
**Uptown and Downtown GH**

**Mostly Books**  
**Books for all Ages**

**Kelly's Café and Espresso**

**Sea Hags Gift Shop**

**Morso**

**Eat and drink at the head of the bay**

