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**Communities include:
Lake Oswego, Oregon City,
Sherwood, Tigard, Tualatin,
West Linn, Wilsonville,
and more**

Newsletter

Volume 49, Number 4

December 2023





Prez Sez



Jeanne Lemieux & Diana Ricks

A Different Take on the December Celebrations

Three very special holidays occur during the month of December: Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. While two are religious and one is cultural, there are similarities. Each holiday has its own specific symbols – menorahs and dreidels; wreaths and trees; kinara, unity cup,

and bowls of fruit. Each holiday also has its own customs, meanings, and ways to celebrate. However, there is one symbol common to all – the importance of light. Light overcoming darkness represents the hope, unity, and beliefs of all people. There are also common themes in all the celebrations. The themes highlight the importance of **FAMILY, GIFTS, GRATITUDE, and CHARITY.**

We enjoy gathering with our **FAMILY**, whether nuclear, extended, or chosen, and spending time together. It is important to learn to be present in the moment, which is different from giving presents.

The giving of **GIFTS** is a tradition in all these celebrations that delights children as well as adults. For Hanukkah a traditional gift is a coin, either actual currency or chocolate. The idea is to teach responsibility. The Christmas gift is usually something from a letter to Santa. For Kwanzaa, the gift is something homemade. Often overlooked when we consider gift giving is the simple gift, we give of ourselves to family, friends, and the greater community. During this heightened time of connection, we can be generous letting those around us know:

- I care
- I am here for you
- You matter
- I appreciate you
- I feel warmth in my heart for you
- Here is my love

When we actually say these words, it makes a difference in other people's lives.

GRATITUDE combines the emotion of thankfulness and the attitude of appreciation. We experience gratitude by recognizing the goodness in our lives and how that goodness came to us. We express gratitude through our words and deeds.

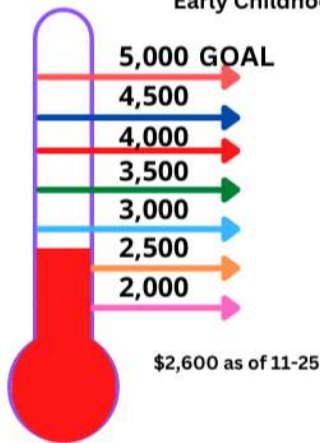
The three holidays are also a time to be charitable. **CHARITY** is reaching out through generosity and helpfulness toward those in need or who are suffering. It can be through active service or financial assistance. Charity comes from the heart and is an expression of love.

It is easy to see that despite being from different faiths and origins there are common themes to our celebrations. No matter what tradition is “yours,” it is a time to indulge in festive foods and we hope you can join us for our branch Holiday party on December 10th from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at Pam Berg’s home.

May you enjoy your winter festivities and meet us back in 2024 with renewed hope and determination to be involved in our world to further the lives of girls and women.



Lake Oswego Branch
PCC Scholarship for
Early Childhood Education



We are just over half way to our scholarship goal. **CONGRATULATIONS** and **THANKS** to all members who have contributed thus far. We will update the thermometer at the end of each month. As a reminder you can donate in two ways:

1. to donate with a credit card, go to the state website, select Special Projects, click on the donate button, and choose LO PCC scholarship.
2. to donate with a check, make the check payable to AAUW Special Projects - :LO PCC scholarship and send to:

Lake Oswego AAUW
P. O. Box 2078
Lake Grove, OR 97035

Click [HERE](#) for more information about our scholarship.

Watch this space for future updates and thanks again.



Membership



It's a Coffee

Monday, January 22, 2024, 10 am-11:30 am

All members are invited. Let's welcome new members and reconnect with old ones. More details will be in the January Newsletter.



INTEREST GROUP HAPPENINGS



Lunch Bunch, 3rd Tuesday at 11:30 am, Contact: Charlene Vojtilla, charjoy8@gmail.com

Date: December 19th, Location: Five Spice, Lake Oswego.

RSVP is required to ensure seating if you would like to attend.

Delightful Dining, Saturday, December 2nd

December's theme is Slavic/Ukrainian. Please contact Jane if you would like to join this group.

Interpretive Books, 3rd Thursday at 9:30 am, Contact Laura Eyer, eyerlaura@gmail.com

Date: December 21st, Book: *Becoming Duchess Goldblatt – A Memoir* (Anonymous author)

Murder by the Book, 2nd Wednesday at noon, Contact Jane Taft taft.jane@gmail.com

Date: December 13th, Book: *The Hollow* by Agatha Christie

Non-Fiction Books, 2nd Monday at 11:15 am, Contact: Mary Pat Silveira mpsilveira@usa.net

Date: December 11th, Book: *Free: Two Years, Six Lives, and the Long Journey Home* by Lauren Kessler

Thursday Evening Books, 4th Thursday at 7:00 pm, Contact Suzanne Kaveckis, smkaveckis@icloud.com

No meeting in December; next meeting January 25th

4th Tuesday Books, 4th Tuesday at 11:00 am, Contact Lynda Bigler libigler@easystreet.net

No meeting in December; next meeting January 23rd

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

I attended an AAUW State Zoom in October titled Brave Spaces, Safe Spaces. We Disagree, Now What?. The focus of the meeting was how to have positive conversations with others, particularly when the topics are difficult, i.e., emotionally charged issues. The discussion centered around “biases.” There were several different types of bias explained, however, I will focus on “confirmation bias.”

With “confirmation bias” the speaker:

- Only remembers the facts that reinforce their beliefs
- Disregards information that contradicts their beliefs
- Fails to seek out objective information
- Misinterprets misinformation based on their current belief

We need to be aware of our biases and work toward overcoming them. We can do this by:

- Knowing bias exists
- Reflect on “What if the opposite were true?”
- Collecting objective data

When it comes to difficult discussions, it is important to be empathetic, ask open-ended questions, be curious, and be an active listener.

I hope you find this information helpful for your upcoming family gatherings for your December holiday celebrations.

Submitted by Marty Maharg, Diversity Chair

Follow-up to Our October Program

The recent NPR Weekend Edition had a nine minute segment regarding a new documentary (*The ABCs of Book Banning*) which shows the impact on the kids of book bans in Florida public schools. Click [HERE](#) to listen to the segment. The documentary is streaming on Paramount+.

Submitted by Pam Berg



[2023-2024 Branch Officers](#)



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