



Volume 54 Issue 7

Pleasant Hill-Martinez Branch N.E.W.S.

Now/Events/Women/Success
Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy,
education, philanthropy and research

March 2012

Saving Money on Your Taxes

Featuring Gus Kramer, CCC Tax Assessor

Wednesday, March 21

7:00 pm

Brookview Clubhouse

1201 Monument Blvd



Gus Kramer was elected to the Office of Assessor of Contra Costa County in 1994. Gus has served the tax payers for more than 17 years and has been re-elected for another term. He will be talking to us with some tips on how we may save taxes.

Mr. Kramer has a background of public service in our county since 1974. He grew up in Bay Point, California and is a graduate of the San Francisco College of Mortuary Science and the University of San Francisco. Gus is a member of the California Assessors' Association and has more than 30 years as a licensed Real Estate Salesperson. Guests are welcome.

This very large, blank space has been saved for you to record your Oscar favorites – which is what I must have been doing when I went on to other pages and didn't realize that I had left it until it was too late and I need to get it out to you all. I hope you like to doodle 😊 Kit



Il Messaggero

Interbranch Council (IBC) will hold a Public Policy Training presentation at its next meeting on March 27th at 7:00 p.m. Everyone who is interested in Public Policy should consider attending. Please let me know if you would like to be included. I would love to have a large group of us participating.

The California State AAUW Convention is happening soon in Santa Clara. It will be the last CA AAUW Convention to be held in Northern California for at least 4 years. This convention provides us with a great opportunity to get inspired and energized. There will be many excellent speakers on the pressing issues of the day. It's certain to be elevating. Please let Janice Walker or me know if you are interested in attending. Our organization has budgeted money to help with our registration.

Our wonderful "Sunshine" lady, Gayle Garrison, has been sending cheer-up messages to our friends with health issues. The effect has been to put more sunshine in their lives. If you know of someone who needs a little "smile" let Gayle know and she will try to lighten up their day.

Our March 21st meeting should provide us knowledge & humor with Gus Kramer, our County Assessor, as our speaker on property taxes. Everyone should plan to attend!!

Ciao and Amore,
Kathy and Marilyn

Sunshine

To help the branch support our members, please send information for cards of joy and sympathy to:

Gayle Garrison
925-798-7528

Tarheel61@excite.com

2011– 2012 Leadership Team

Presidents:

Kathy Searles 228-5700
searles3@comcast.net

Marilyn Thelen 228-2600
ilmthelen@comcast.net

Vice Presidents Program:

Gretel Holit 939-6436
ggholit@hotmail.com

Sally Whitsett 689-5493
swhits@att.net

Vice President's Membership:

Reba Siero 228-8211
rebasioero@yahoo.com

Marti Martin 229-3574
richmar1016@sbcglobal.net

Vice Presidents – Education Fund:

Marlene DeLaurenti 934-4171
mdl@astound.net

Alana MacDonald 933-4427
Alanam88@gmail.com

Vice President – LAF:

Patricia Harris 228-6263
patriciaharris4@mac.com

Secretary:

Joy Barden 935-7118
joy_barden@yahoo.com

Treasurer:

Jill Anderson 932-2063
anderson216@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor:

Kit Hein 228-7503
kjhein@comcast.net

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Please send copy to Kit Hein

kjhein@comcast.net

AAUW Help Line: 800/326-AAUW

CA AAUW Office

Administrative Assistant: Susan Crabtree

Email: Office@aauw-ca.org

Web Page: aauw-ca.org

AAUW Contra Costa County Inter-branch Council

(CCC-IBC) Chairs:

Marie Bonilla edmarie.bonilla@comcast.net

Tena Gallegher Tena@aol.com

INTEREST GROUP MEETINGS



**BRIDGE

Evening Bridge will be playing at my house (Elizabeth DiPietro) on Monday, March 5th at 7P. This is the regular 1st Mon of the month night bridge.



Grand Slammers will meet on Monday March 12 at 12:45. Each player contributes \$3...it goes to Local Scholarships.....we have lots of fun, and welcome players of all levels. Call Gayle Garrison if you would like to play....or e-mail.



** **MORNING BOOKS** will meet on Wednesday, March 7th, 10 am, at Bernice Ball's, 92 Rolling Green Circle, PH. We will be discussing *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford. This is truly a bitter/sweet story about the Japanese internment during WWII in Seattle. On April 4 the book chosen is *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky* by Heidi Durrow. Please join us for great discussions!



** **NIMBLE FINGERS** will meet at the home of Nancy Schwemberger, 1280 Panorama Drive (private road), Lafayette, on Thursday, March 8th at 10 AM. If you are coming, please RSVP to Nancy at 284-7097



** **IN INDELIBLE INK IN INDELIBLE INK** will meet on Wednesday, March 14th, 10 am, at Marilyn Tubb's. Our theme is: "If I were running for president, my platform would be . . . " We would love to hear your story and we like hearing oral versions, too! We don't critique your writings, so there is no pressure. Please come!



** **MATINEE IDLE** will go to the movies on Thursday, March 22nd. We usually attend a matinee at a local theatre. Call Marlene (689.5439) if you are planning to attend, or if you have any good suggestions for a movie. We always discuss the movie after over coffee or other liquid refreshment.



** **EVENING BOOKS** will meet on Monday, March 26th, 7 pm, at Georgette Armstrong's. We will be reading a classic by John Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath*. If you haven't read it in a while, you will enjoy reading it now. Have times really changed? Please join us for a very interesting discussion.



** **GENEOLOGY** Saturday, March 31, 2012 Sacramento Genealogy Society presents their Spring Seminar featuring George G. Morgan, author of "How To Do Everything: Genealogy" There will be a book signing during lunch.

For more information go to

<http://www.rootcellar.org/>

Our Genealogy Section will not be making car pool arrangements.

The Sutro Library is Moving

The California State Library has announced that the Sutro Library will be moving to a new location in spring of 2012. Genealogists, historians, and other researchers will discover that Sutro's rich collections and resources are newly housed in a spacious, well-lit reading room designed specifically for our patrons. March 12, 2012 will close for the move. May of 2012 will open in new location.

New Location
1600 Holloway Avenue, San Francisco 94132

Sutro will be on the 5th and 6th Floors of the newly renovated J. Paul Leonard Library on the San Francisco State University campus.

For more information, contact (415) 731-4477 or sutro@library.ca.gov.

Membership Matters

Marti Martin and Reba Siero

At a recent IBC meeting, Tena Gallagher, Membership Vice-President for the Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch shared some materials and ideas. One of the things she shared was a list about the value of AAUW Membership. A few of these were:

On the National Level:

National media outreach and visibility on our issues

Advocacy on Capitol Hill on issues affecting equity for women and girls

National programs and membership campaigns ideas and materials

On the State Level:

Leadership training materials

Online resources for branch and state officers on the AAUW CA Website

The *Perspective* publication to keep members informed

On the Individual Level:

Subscription to AAUW Outlook and access to Action Alert

Access to the member center on both state and national websites

Member benefits such as insurance, travel and magazine discounts

To these you could add the intangible value of networking, friendship and camaraderie and being part of a group of educated women working towards equity and education for women and girls.

Don't forget -- if you know anyone who is thinking of joining the branch that springtime is a good time to join. If they join after March 15, they can get up to 15 months for the regular 12 month dues of \$83 (their membership would expire on June 30, 2013.) Why not invite a friend to join you at your next AAUW activity or give their contact information to Reba or Marti? If they have an AA or higher degree, they are eligible to join us. We will be happy to contact them.

Our positive thoughts go out to Suzanne Salter's husband, Dan, who is recovering from a heart attack on January 25th. Thanks to quick medical action and great care, he is doing very well.

Please make a correction in your directories. Elena Noble's telephone number should be: 672-2470.

A REMINDER: For those of you who itemize your income tax, \$46 of the AAUW \$49 national dues is tax deductible.

In Memoriam

Jane Fernandez, a member of Martinez Branch for many years, passed away peacefully on February 2 with family nearby. Memorial services are being arranged and will be shared with you once they are organized. For more information contact Penny Harris at (925) 229-1493 or penny.harris@comcast.net

The branch mourns the passing of one of PH-Mar AAUW's strong supporters, Marlene's husband Dick Maksel.

Dick gave his time to many organizations in our community as a Ruling Elder in his church, a Scout Leader and a Director on the P.H. Recreation and Park Board. An avid outdoors man- enjoying hiking the Pacific Trail and sailing the San Francisco Bay and Delta.

We in the branch will miss his constant "ready to help" attitude with always a twinkle in his eye that made you know a "got ya" joke was soon to follow. His smile made you feel welcome. His hands were there for your needs- whether it be moving furniture after the Soup Supper or having fun being an ice cream "scooper" at the Ice Cream Social for our annual meeting.

We will miss his generous support and extend our heartfelt sympathy to Marlene and their son Matthew and daughter, Rebecca. Bless them all, everyone.



COMMUNITY

Harriett Burt – Martinez

Suffrage Film Fest: continuing the centennial celebration of Woman's Suffrage in California: See the flier at the end of this newsletter.

CCC History Society exhibit: Before BART:



Electric Railroads link Contra Costa County from early 1900s to 1940 with Oakland and Sacramento.

CCC History Center: 610 Main Street. Tues, Wed, Thurs 9a.m. to 4p.m., third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. through June 28. Admission Free.

Martinez Citizen of the Year Dinner: March 24 – 6-9 p.m. at the Martinez Events Center, 524 Main Street. Contact Martinez Chamber of Commerce for more information.

Martinez Arts Association SWAN Day (Support Women Artists Now) exhibit March 31, 2012 at the old Waterfront Park p.m. For more information, <http://martinezarts.squarespace.com/swan-day>



Train Depot by from 10 a.m to 4 information,

SAM PROGRAM AT FAIR OAKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



SAM (Student Art & Music) volunteer program at Fair Oaks Elementary will be presented during the month of March – March 6th – March 30th to be specific. A class schedule has been emailed to members who have participated previously in our program but I'm wondering if you were able to open the schedule since many have not responded. Let me know and I will send you another schedule.

The class will consist of two 1 hour sessions in each class that need to be separated by one week.

Students will be making figures of non kiln clay which needs a week to dry before applying paint. Students will be exposed to Camille Saint-Saens *Carnival of the Animals* to help them with images of different animals



to make out of clay. The paint used for the project will stain so it would be helpful if you have old shirts for students to wear while painting.

Classes K through 5th grade will participate in the program. Please contact Mary McGhee at mary@mcgheemail.com or Marilyn Tubbs at marclin@comcast.net if you are able to help us even if for only one hour. The Fair Oaks students thank you!

AAUW FUND \$

Marlene DeLaurenti

Thanks again to our members for their continuing generous support of AAUW's crucial work through their contributions to AAUW Funds. In 2009, the various funds we supported in AAUW were organized into the structure we now call AAUW Funds. No Longer called EF or LAF, all programs are now under the umbrella of AAUW Funds. Our annual drive takes place in the Fall. This year we were able to contribute \$4500.

Your fully deductible contributions can be restricted to the specific fund or program of your choice simply by writing the fund or program name on your check. Some of the most commonly designated funds are:

- * Legal Advocacy Fund #3999
Legal Case Support
Legal Case Support Travel Grants



Campus Outreach

- * Educational Opportunities Fund # 4336
Fellowships and Grants
Undergraduate Scholarship

Clearinghouse

- * Eleanor Roosevelt Fund Fund # 9170
Research Reports such as:
"How Schools Short Change Girls"
"Hostile Hallways"
"Why So Few? Women In Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics"
"Behind The Pay Gap"

- * Public Policy Fund # 4337
Government Relations
Civic Engagement
Field Organizing

- * Leadership Fund # 4339
National Conference For College

Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)
Campus Action Projects

Local Scholarship

Ish Mendonsa and Elva Valli

ADOPT-A-POLL

The CCC Elections Department is preparing for the June 3 Primary Election and will be accepting applications for the Adopt-A-Poll program in which an organization "Adopts" a precinct and is responsible for staffing the polling place on election day. This program gives the organization the flexibility of AM or PM shifts. The stipend for all participating members is combined in one check made payable to the organization. Requirements for Poll workers are:

- *be a registered voter,
- *be a member of the service group, and
- *complete all required training.

If you are interested in participating in this program and having the stipend help local scholarships, please contact Ish Mendonsa or Elva Valli. It's a fun and easy way to help.

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This year's nominating committee has developed the following slate of candidates for
**PH-MTZ AAUW
 SLATE OF OFFICERS
 FOR 2012-2013**

The election will be held at the April General meeting. Nominations can be made from the floor with the prior approval of the nominee.

Presidential Team ~	Marilyn Thelen Janice Walker
Program Veeps	Shelley Jacobson Sherrie Moore
Membership Veeps	Elena Noble Reba Siero
AAUW Funds	Marlene DeLaurenti Patricia Harris Alana Macdonald
Secretary	Joy Barden
Treasurer	Jill Anderson

Nominating Committee: Marlene Maksel, Chair; Marti Martin and Alana Macdonald (alternate) representing the Board; Ish Mendonsa, Lynn Murphy, Janice Walker and Sherrie Moore (alternate) representing the general membership.

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LEGAL ADVOCACY FUNDS

**Join us for
 Bridge and Mexican Train**

**Thurs., March 29
12:30-4pm
Brookview Clubhouse**

\$10 to benefit AAUW LAF

Not a game player? Please come to socialize and share dessert.

For reservations: call or email Patricia Harris 228-6263 or patriciaharris4@mac.com

Open to members and non-members alike

TECH TREK

Katrinka March

SAVE THE DATE

Once Upon a Mattress

a musical retelling of the fairytale "The Princess and the Pea"
 presented by the drama club of Alhambra High School



April 27th
 7pm

Alhambra High School Performing Arts
 Wine and cheese party before the show:
 5:30pm
 at the home of Trinka and George March
 650 Linden Lane, Martinez
 \$30 for tickets, party, and
 Tech Trek donation

Put this on your calendar now and more information for reservations will follow in the April N.E.W.S.



**REGISTER NOW FOR THE LAST "ANNUAL"*
 AAUW - CA STATE CONVENTION
 APRIL 13 – 15
 SANTA CLARA MARRIOTT HOTEL**

Money is available in the branch Conference & Convention budget to assist any member who wishes to attend convention. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know your organization better as well as educate yourself on issues of gender equity, school bullying, the Equal Pay Initiative, and much more. We already have members who will be carpooling for Friday only and Saturday only. Don't miss out. Read your *California Perspective* for full details. Call Marilyn Thelen (228-2600) or Kit Hein (228-7503) if you're interested in car pooling and for more information on branch assistance.

*State conventions will now alternate with Association convention and be held every 2 years.

AAUW WASHINGTON UPDATE

Washington Update is internal communication for public policy leaders and members of the American Association of University Women. Request your own subscription online at <http://capwiz.com/aauw/utr/1/IFIHRKPPUK/HRJVRKPVSL/7972700231>

Friday, February 24, 2012 (excerpts)

NEWS

Defense of Marriage Act Provisions Deemed Unconstitutional

A federal judge appointed by a Republican president has ruled provisions of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional, citing the law's "blatant disregard of the well-accepted concept of federalism in the area of domestic relations." The ruling by the George W. Bush appointee comes as a blow to House GOP leaders who have hired lawyers to defend DOMA in court after the Obama administration announced it would no longer do so.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Justice recently said it will not defend the constitutionality of a DOMA statute that prevents same-sex partners of veterans or members of the military from receiving federal benefits. The Obama administration also announced it intends to finalize regulations that would advance benefits for the same-sex partners of federal

employees. AAUW believes that the Defense of Marriage Act should be repealed and or federal law as a vehicle for enshrining discrimination. AAUW firmly believes that no American should be denied the full range of civil rights and civil liberties due to sexual orientation or gender identity. We are committed to vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights as well as freedom in the definition of family and a guarantee of civil rights in all family structures.



Study: Most Low-Wage Workers Lack Access to Employer Insurance Coverage

A new report from the Center for Economic and Policy Research at Georgetown University found that only 26 percent of low-wage workers-defined as those in the bottom 20 percent of hourly wages-received health insurance through their employers in 2010. In addition, the rate of low-wage workers who are uninsured rose from 16 percent in 1979 to 39 percent in 2010. The report notes that if the new health care law, the Affordable Care Act, is repealed, the coverage rates for low-income Americans will decline even further.

AAUW believes that everyone is entitled to health care that is high quality, affordable, and easily accessible. AAUW is hopeful that the health care law will substantially improve a



system that has not worked as well as it needs to for far too long.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATES

Contraception Debate Ongoing at National, State Levels

Georgetown Law student Sandra Fluke's voice was heard this week after she was denied an opportunity to speak last week at a hearing on birth control hosted by House Republicans. Fluke was scheduled to be the Democrats' only witness-and the only woman on the panel-but was left off the panel after oversight committee leaders called her unqualified.

As a result, AAUW brought in Fluke for a public forum Wednesday on access to birth control, and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) hosted a hearing on women's health Thursday where Fluke was the only witness to testify. Pelosi said during the hearing, "It's amazing what lengths they [Republicans] will go to in order to not hear the voice of women."

In related news, a poll by Public Policy Polling for Daily KOS & SEIU showed that approximately two-thirds of Americans oppose an amendment by Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO) that would allow employers to deny coverage of health services, including birth control, based on their own personal objections.

Also this week, seven states filed a lawsuit against the federal government's requirement that religious employers offer health insurance that includes contraceptive coverage. The seven states involved in the lawsuit are Nebraska, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Florida, and Texas.

AAUW has long believed that politicians should not insert themselves into the reproductive health care decision-making process and supports the right of every woman access to safe and comprehensive reproductive health services. AAUW and The Coalition to Protect Women's Health Care oppose any measure that attempts to restrict or limit the regulation on preventive care services and contraceptive coverage.

RESOURCES FOR ADVOCATES

Sign Up Your Friends and Family for Action Network!

Visit AAUW's Take Action page of our website: http://aauw.org/act/issue_advocacy/ where AAUW members and nonmembers alike can sign up for Action Network. It is an excellent way to introduce potential members to AAUW's advocacy. You can also print out flyers online. Use flyers to sign up friends, family and coworkers to AAUW Action Network. These flyers are great to use at branch events, community events, etc.

UNIQUELY AAUW

AAUW Public Policy Fund Pins - and a Bonus

Show your support for advocacy for women and girls - and get a tax deduction. Contribute \$100 or more to the AAUW Public Policy Fund and receive the fund's annual pin. Please support this crucial work with a tax-deductible contribution through our secure website.

Take action at the AAUW Two Minute Activist: <http://capwiz.com/aauw/home/>

AN INANIMATE OBJECT

By Marti Martin

Written as an "assignment" for the In Indelible Ink section. See how much fun they have? They welcome new members at every meeting. Illustrations added by your sneaky editor.

I was in a hurry and having only a few items, I thought I would save time and headed over to the 15 items or less self-checkout at the local Lucky's store. This would be a new experience -- WHAT A MISTAKE!!!



Following the directions from the irritating computer voice, I picked up the first item from the cart and attempted to find the scanner. I *tried various positions, ran the package back and forth, all the while hearing that voice, "please scan your first item, "please scan your first item," "please scan your first item", over and over again.* Finally, the little beep sounded and I followed the next direction – *"place the item in the bagging area".* Another snag – the plastic bags hanging in the bagging area would not come apart. I set the item on the counter, only to hear that voice again *"Place the item in the bagging area,"* *Place the item in the bagging area,"* *Place the item in the bagging area,"* Finally, getting the bag apart I dropped the sack of flour into the bag, causing the bag to break and the voice again to say: *"Place the item in the bagging area,"* Finally, with a new bag in place and the item inside, I took the next item out of the cart.



Now, I hear, *"Unable to identify item, please key in item number."* Finding a number next to the bar code, I typed it in on the key pad, only to hear *"item number not recognized, please look up item".* Now, I had to type in the name of the item – *"grapes."* Photos of red grapes and green grapes appear, but no black grapes. Going forward and back through all the photos of fruit – no black grapes. Finally, I appeal to the clerk standing idly at the end of the row (probably silently laughing at my ineptitude) and she said to put in the number on the bag. I told her I had done that but the machine didn't recognize it – she said it was not the number by the bar code, but a number printed on the bag of grapes – YIKE – Who knew that?

On to the next three items – all uneventful. The bag was full so I moved it back into the cart only to hear – *"Items removed from bagging area"* -- DUH – What else was I supposed to do with them? On to the last item and time to pay.



The machine now says, *"Scan more items or push button to pay."* I push the button  to pay and pick up my purse to get out my wallet. In order to take out the wallet, I set my purse on the counter. This apparently is forbidden as the machine says *"UNFAMILIAR ITEM IN BAGGING AREA. PLEASE REMOVE!"* Now, how is a person supposed to take her wallet out of her purse without setting it down? Finally getting out my wallet, I push the button that says cash and hear, *"Insert cash or scan credit card."* The machine quickly swallows my first \$20 bill and demands again *"Insert cash or scan credit card."* I insert the second \$20 bill which is again quickly swallowed and again it demands more money. Finally, after several more demands, it realizes it has sufficient funds and tells me to remove my receipt and take my change. The coins are easy to find as they make noise when they drop, the machine spits out the receipt at the top, but finding the change in bills requires a major investigation to locate them coming out underneath the grocery scanner.

WHAT AN ORDEAL! And, it did not save me any time at all. After battling with the machine, the people with the full carts in the lines with a real person had left the premises long before me. Whatever happened to a friendly clerk at every register ready to help? This is one inanimate object that will stay inanimate and never speak to me again.

THE MARTINEZ & CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETIES
PRESENT



**A
SUFFRAGE
FILM
FEST**

3/19/12 ONE WOMAN, ONE VOTE

**THE 72 YEAR HISTORY OF STRUGGLE
BEFORE VICTORY – 1848-1920**

3/26/12 CALIFORNIA WOMEN WIN THE VOTE

**AN AMAZING EIGHT MONTH CAMPAIGN
TO ELECTION DAY – OCT. 10, 1911**

4/2/12 IRON-JAWED ANGELS

**HILARY SWANK STARS IN A COMPELLING
DRAMATIZATION OF THE TUMULTUOUS
FINAL YEARS OF STRUGGLE**

**LOCATION: MARTINEZ VETERANS HALL
930 WARD STREET, MARTINEZ**
TIME: 7:00 P.M. (DOORS OPEN AT 6:30)
SUGGESTED DONATION: \$5

**EACH FILM WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A
BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES RAISED**

March 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5  <u>EVENING BRIDGE</u>	6	7 <u>MORNING BOOKS</u> 	8 <u>NIMBLE FINGERS</u>	9	10
11	12 <u>GRAND SLAMMERS</u> 	13	14 <u>IN INDELIBLE INK</u>	15	16	17
18	19 "One Woman, One Vote"	20	21 <u>GUS KRAMER</u>	22 <u>MATINEE</u> <u>IDLE</u> 	23	24 Mtz, Citizen of the Year
25	26 <u>EVENING BOOKS</u> 	27 <u>IBC PUBLIC POLICY</u>	28	29 <u>LAF Games</u> 	30	31 SWAN Day <u>GENEOLOGY</u>

Save the Date: April 2 – "Iron-Jawed Angels"; April 13-15 AAUW-CA Convention; April 27th "Once Upon a Mattress"



Pleasant Hill – Martinez Branch
533 Roanoke Dr.
Martinez 94553

Membership – AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research. AAUW is open to all graduates of two year accredited colleges with AA degrees and/or accredited four year colleges or universities. In principle and practice AAUW values and supports diversity. There shall be no barriers to full participation in the organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.