

The Chico AAUW Grapevine



American Association of University Women - Chico Branch Vol. 33 No. 8 Apr 2021

Next Meeting:

**Sunday, April 25, 2021 at 2 p.m.
General Branch meeting on Zoom**

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

AAUW membership is open to all graduates holding a recognized associate (or equivalent), baccalaureate, or higher degree from a qualified educational institution.

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.



This branch meeting will host two leaders from our local arts community. **Pat Macias**, a Chico AAUW member, is also the Executive Director of the Museum of Northern California Art (monca). **Scott Seaton** is the Music Director and conductor of the North State Symphony.

They will join us via Zoom to speak about what their organizations are doing now and in the future. During the height of the pandemic, they both had to find new

ways to engage with their audiences while “live” events with audiences were prohibited.

While monca is now open to the public, the Symphony is not yet offering in-person performances. This should be a fun and insightful meeting about art and music and the overall state of the creative arts during COVID. A Zoom link will be sent via email a few days before the meeting to allow you to participate. Invite a spouse or friend to sit in with you.



BOARD MEETING - Saturday, April 10 at 3 p.m.

Since we are still not allowed to hold in-person meetings, we will be discussing what we are going to do for our May meeting. Be thinking about what you might want to do for an awards meeting or luncheon some time after July. Board meetings are open to members. Contact Jan Britton at (530) 896-1240 if you would like to receive a Zoom link to participate.

AAUW STATE MEETING - Saturday, April 17 at 9:30 a.m.

Register for the Saturday morning, AAUW California general meeting. You will meet your leaders, see which branches win awards, and hear three Speech Trek finalists. You might be interested in the Speech Trekkers because Chico branch may join this delightful and charming project. The link to register will appear in your email In-Box or you can register on line at www.aauw-ca.org.



Message from the President

Branch Officers

President -

Jan Britton

Membership -

Mary Huntsinger

Betty Lusina

Finance -

Marilyn Myrick

Secretary -

Adele Arnold

Newsletter Editor -

Jana Lawton

Public Policy -

Carol Holzgrafe

Tech Trek Coordinator -

Joan Cleveland

Technology -

Helen Gesick

Historian -

Barbara Paige

During March, AAUW went into high gear at both the national and local levels. There is a lot going on that involves every member.

First, there is an important new amendment that has been proposed for our existing Association bylaws. The amendment reads:

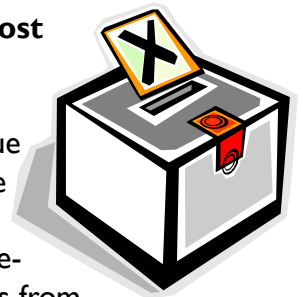
An individual who supports the AAUW mission and pays annual AAUW dues shall be eligible to be an individual member with all rights and responsibilities of AAUW membership.

What this means is, if approved, prospective members can join even if they do not have a two or four-year college degrees.

Starting April 7, all current members will receive a ballot from national concerning the new amendment. You should receive your ballot via email, and you have until mid-May to return it. AAUW will use your current email address for this message. If you have made changes in the last year or so, please call our branch treasurer, Marilyn Myrick, at (530) 520-1543 to report the change. If you do not have an email address on file with the Association, you will receive your ballot by mail.

The amendment was discussed at a Zoom meeting with our branch members on Wednesday, March 31. All members were invited to participate, many did, and we had a vibrant discussion about AAUW and the question of college degrees. There is an excellent AAUW webinar on this topic entitled: *AAUW National Town Hall on Member Education Requirement*; it is available online at www.aauw.org until May 17.

No matter your opinion on this bylaws change, the most important thing is to take time to vote.



Locally, we had an interesting meeting presented by the League of Women Voters of Butte County concerning the media. The panel discussion included Mike Wolcott, editor of the Enterprise-Record; Natalie Hanson, a reporter from the Enterprise-Record; Dr. Jennifer Brundidge, a professor in communications from CSU, Chico; and Forest Harmon, a lecturer on public relations and journalism at CSU, Chico.

Our AAUW branches in Chico and Paradise have started a committee on homelessness. We are looking for a few more people who want to be involved in this study of an important local issue. Please call me at (530)520-2101 and leave a message emphasizing that you want to join this committee.

*Jan Britton
Chico Branch President*

Branch News and Notes

Lobby Day

by Jan Britton

On March 24, two of our local members participated in the annual Lobby Day meetings with California legislators in both the House and Senate in Sacramento. This year our meetings were held over Zoom or Microsoft Teams. While not in person, there was strong interest expressed during the meetings about our organization and the bills we supported this year.

This was my first Lobby Day and I attended with Kathy Sweet. In order to participate, we both had a “training” class two days prior to our meetings. We were also provided with information about three bills AAUW-CA supports. It was exciting and we hope you will be inspired to sign up next year to be a part of Lobby Day. The whole setup was very well planned and run.

Initially, our state AAUW Public Policy Group reads all the bills that are being presented in the California State Legislature each year and then selects about a half dozen that our organization can support.

When we met on March 24 over Zoom, all 100+ of us were divided into groups of three or four members and were sent off to our assigned meetings along with a leader for each group. The leader introduced us all to the legislator or their aides and was also responsible for sending information on each of the bills to legislator’s offices following the meetings. Each one of us selected a bill to present and received talking points to bring up during the meeting. Here is an overview of the three bills we discussed:

Assembly Bill 92 Childcare Family Fees Act - Governor Gavin Newsom recently released a Master Plan for Preschool and Early Childhood Education and this bill supports portions of the plan. This bill aims to stem the number of providers that have gone out of business during the pandemic and helps to make childcare more affordable for families.

Senate Bill 62 Garment Worker Protection Act - Many garment workers are migrant women who work 10- to 12-hour days. They are paid by a piece rate. This bill eliminates payment by piece work and shifts payment to legal wage levels and still allows for incentive-based bonuses. It also expands liability for wage violations.

Senate Bill 373 Consumer Debt: Economic Abuse - Prohibits creditors and debt collectors from being able to collect from an individual when that individual can demonstrate the debt was incurred through economic abuse. It will also prevent the debt from being reported to credit agencies. The primary focus is on survivors of domestic violence, elder or dependent adult abuse, and foster youth. Debt taken out in their names without their consent damages individuals’ credit and forces them into years of debt repayment, reducing their economic stability and leaving them vulnerable to future abuse, poverty, and housing instability or homelessness. This bill seeks to stop this economic abuse.

Overall, these bills demonstrate the type of work in which AAUW is engaged at the legislative level. We seek to fulfill our goals to protect children and families in a wide variety of areas and through a variety of means that end up as viable laws.

The CHICO GRAPE-VINE is published by the Chico Branch of AAUW. Items for inclusion can be mailed to Jana Lawton, newsletter editor, 1112 Bidwell Avenue, Chico, CA 95926 or e-mailed to jdlawton72@gmail.com (preferred)

Member News and Notes

AAUW California Annual Meeting

Our AAUW California Annual Meeting will be held via Zoom for the second year. No travel, no hotel reservations, and no lunch, once again. But, that means you can attend at no cost from your office, living room, or kitchen

You will learn what has been happening in California this past year and it is a lot! You will see the three Speech Trek finalists, learn who our 2020 State Named Gift Honoree is and see the first Equity Award given to former State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson. AAUW Board Chair, Julia Brown, will join us and we have a special event brought to us by past Co-President Cathy Foxhoven.

The meeting is open to the public. Registration is required. Visit www.aauw-ca.org to register. It's FREE this year!



And still more from Carol Holzgrafe about your State AAUW organization

You all know that I was elected to the state AAUW board of directors two years ago, right? Well, my term is up this June 30 and I am running for a second term. And I would like to serve for two more years.

Our bylaws limit the AAUW California Board of Directors to twelve members, including President-Elect, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Directors. In 2021 we vote to fill 3 positions (President-Elect, Chief Financial Officer and Director) and approve the Public Policy Priorities.

The AAUW California voting period will begin on April 16th and will close on May 7, 2021. We provide every member the opportunity to vote electronically. When the election period starts, each member will receive an email message containing a personal invitation to vote. There will be a link to click that will take you to the ballot. No password or code needs to be entered. Members who do not have a working email address will receive information about how to vote via postal mail.

A quick reminder that there is also a vote on a change to the bylaws of our Association. AAUW members can now vote on proposed changes to the bylaws recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee that would eliminate the degree requirement for membership. **Voting in this election closes on Monday, May 17 at 5:00 pm ET.**

Two important elections where your vote matters.

*Carol Holzgrafe
Chico and Paradise branches
Director, AAUW California
Branch Assistance*

Branch News and Notes



Please come support our Tech Trekker! Local Soroptimist International's Giving Committee annually honors several young women, or community organizations that support them, with a gift or scholarship. Each year, for the past several years, they have awarded one full scholarship for Tech Trek. This year at their April 14th Awards Luncheon, a virtual event, they will honor our 2020 Tech Trekker, Ella Grothe.

We've chosen Ella to represent last year's nominees, who have all now been invited to AAUW's 2021 *Virtual Camp*, because Ella embodies the interest and enthusiasm AAUW looks for in Tech Trekkers. Her 7th grade teachers described her as "highly motivated," she participates in Science Fair, is a member of Chico Jr. High School leadership, and she "Zoomed" in for both STEM projects our Chico Branch members held to fill the void left by cancellation of the in-person 2020 Tech Trek Camp at UC Davis.

This is an excellent opportunity for a young girl to speak before a group, sharing a few words about her interest in STEM subjects. We invite you to attend the Soroptimist International virtual luncheon at 12:00 noon on April 14. A link will be provided in an email a few days prior to the event to those who RSVP to Joan Cleveland.

Joan Cleveland, Tech Trek Coordinator joancleveland@comcast.net

Public Policy

by Carol Holzgrafe



You remember the ERA – the Equal Rights Amendment? The one that fell three votes short of the number of states needed to ratify before the deadline.

But, from 2017 to 2020, three states: Nevada, Illinois, and Virginia, voted to ratify.

So, Congress is trying it again. In February, the House of Representatives, with bipartisan support, voted to remove the arbitrary deadline for ratifying. However, there are still some barriers: the Senate (Mitch McConnell says he is no fan), and others who challenge the constitutionality of the move. Stay tuned. And for those who always thought that women had equal rights under the Constitution, the answer is no. Just ask Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, and other heroes of the women's movement.

For more in depth descriptions, just do an internet search on "where is the ERA today?"

The new AAUW California Public Policy priorities are now posted at aauw-ca.org. Check them to see where our efforts will take us for the next two years. Click on the "Public Policy" button at the top of the home page. You'll find lots to think about there.

Member News and Notes

Diversity Discussion Group

Our newest interest group is off and running with eleven members. The Diversity Discussion Group has met three times by Zoom and begun developing a mission statement to help define our core purpose. Our working statement is *We want to collaborate with one another and with people of experience in this topic to accomplish three things:*

- Help our Branch attract and welcome a more diverse and inclusive membership that reflects the many cultural dimensions of the community in which we live.
- Increase our own literacy in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion so we can be a touchstone for our membership on issues of DEI.
- Play whatever part we can in overcoming discrimination that we encounter in our community and beyond.

While doing this we expect to enjoy each other's company as we share our thoughts, ideas, and experiences. Our Statement is a living instrument of our intention and we will be revisiting it often to make sure we are always on a forward path toward the objectives that bring us together.

AAUW has a Tool Kit for talking about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the group is working on becoming acquainted with that material as well as planning to attend a webinar on April 22 at 4 p.m.: *How to Have Difficult Conversations*, which will feature elements of the Tool Kit. Anyone interested is welcome to attend, and members should have received an email from National AAUW with webinar registration information.

The Diversity Discussion Group is reading the Book in Common for CSU, Chico and Butte College: *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi, and plans to participate in a free Chico Performances conversation with the author on Wednesday, April 21 from 5:30 to 6:30. The book is widely available and anyone interested in the CSUC conversation can get information on registering by doing an internet search for *CSU, Chico Book in Common* or contacting Kathy Sweet or Jan Britton.

This summer the group also plans to host a contact tree to get in touch one-to-one with each member of our Branch to help us reconnect after the past year of isolation, and to discover the wide range of diversity that our own members bring to our organization. They are expecting to find some lively stories that will highlight the many ways we are already quite diverse. The members of the group are Carol Holzgrafe, Helen Gesick, Jan Britton, Jackie McClain, Jana Lawton, Joan Cleveland, Kathy Sweet, Lyn Smith, Marilyn Myrick, Ruth Berger and Susan Critchfield.

For more information on the Diversity Discussion Group or any of its activities, contact Kathy Sweet at kathylsweet@gmail.com or 256-603-4993. New members are always welcome!

Membership News

Your AAUW branch membership has been vital in helping advance gender and racial equity during this challenging time. The pandemic has been particularly devastating for women and people of color, but with your support we've pushed for much-needed COVID relief and paid-leave benefits, expanded voting access and education, and published important research on student debt and the power gap in colleges and universities. We rely on members like you to help us meet the challenges today's women and girls face - and build a brighter future for everyone.

You will be paying all of your dues – branch, state, and national – at once.

National = \$62/ State \$20/ Branch \$16

Total = \$98

There are two ways to renew:

1) Online – see email from the Association for instructions or contact Marilyn Myrick. This is the easiest way to renew your dues!

2) By check: Make check payable to your AAUW branch. Mail it to:

Marilyn Myrick
8 Montclair Dr.
Chico, CA 95926

We hope you will join us again this year. Together, we can drive meaningful change in 2021

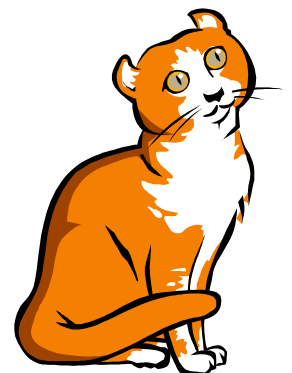
More dues news: As we end the 2020-21 AAUW year, and we all consider renewing our membership, we should consider what we “get” from belonging to such a group. What is your list?

This is mine:

- easy to find friends of inestimable value
- interest groups we wouldn't find anywhere else
- a mission to support (equity for women, education for all and more)
- an in-house legislative advocate (the good lobbyist) working on our behalf in Sacramento
- general meetings to broaden our knowledge of community and self
- the chance to offer the future to our Tech Trek girls, and so much more.

Note: the national dues will increase by \$3 for next year (they can use the money) - less than the cost of one latte from Starbucks. State and branch dues remain the same.

Carol Holzgrafe
AAUW California Board member



Interest Sections

New to AAUW?

Call a group leader for more information about a section you might find of interest. A few have reached capacity but most would welcome new members.

Les Flaneurs

Satsie Veith (530) 570-3550

A group for walking enthusiasts in the Chico and Paradise branches. Walks are scheduled on most Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings 9:30 in winter, 8:30 in summer. Our trail leads us through interesting Chico neighborhoods, lower and middle Bidwell Park (from 5 Mile), and to other nearby towns. Contact Satsie Veith if you want to join us.

Diversity Discussion Group

Kathy Sweet (256) 603-4993

Meeting the last week of April to discuss the Book in Common, *How to be an Antiracist*, and the accompanying CSUC sponsored Chico Performances presentation - a conversation with the author Ibram X. Kendi. We will also be discussing the AAUW webinar, *How to Have Difficult Conversations*. Both events occur the week before we meet for discussion. Time and date of the April discussion meeting will be announced. For more information contact Kathy, (256) 603-4993 or kathysweet@gmail.com,



Foreign Policy Discussion Group

Roxanne Ferry - 891-1722 All welcome.
Group meets 4th Monday at 7 p.m.
Apr 26 - *The two Koreas* - discussion led by Roxanne Ferry



Evening Book Discussion Group

Sue Blizman (530) 891-3489
Group meets at 7:00 p.m. on 2nd Tuesday
Apr 13 - *We Were the Lucky Ones* by Georgia Hunter. Contact Sue for Zoom info

Ethnic Writers Book Discussion Group

Severance Dolan 433-0258 All welcome!
Group meets at 1:00 p.m. on 4th Wednesday
Apr 28 - *Night Tiger* by Yangsze Choo Call Denise for Zoom info (530)343-5711

Non-fiction Book Discussion Group

Group meets on 2nd Friday at 10 a.m.
Contact Susan Critchfield for Zoom info at (530) 519-3460

Mystery Book Discussion Group

Denise Worth 343-5711
Group meets at 3 p.m. on 3rd Wednesday
All welcome.
Apr 21 - *After the Armistice Ball* by Catriona McPherson.
Contact Denise for Zoom info

Computer and iPad Group

Helen Gesick (530) 570-5185
Meets 4th Thursday at 2:00.
Call Helen for Zoom information

Local Events of Interest



The League of Women Voters of Butte County is sponsoring a Zoom presentation on biomass fuel. The speaker, Jim Houtman, will talk on the topic of biomass fuel production in Butte County - putting wildfire debris to good use. Links to the Zoom are available at the League website.

Date: Saturday, April 10

Time: 10 a.m.