

1920-2020

(Early History Compiled by Virginia Smale)

1920: June 1920. Chico AAUW Branch Formed

1924: First money-raiser to sponsor a Health Center. In the City, Plaza a "Country Fair" was held. Various organizations in the community had booths; AAUW had automobile rides out to Sandy Gulch and back for 50¢ per ride.

1928: Sponsored a Health Center (forerunner of Butte County Health Dept.) Sponsored a Community Little Music Series (now Community Concert Association).

1936-40: Presented Art Exhibits from San Francisco Museum of Art. Sponsored a weekly story-hour for children and began first scholarship fund for student in a local college. First mention of a Strawberry Social in 1937.

1940: Sponsored the organization of The Council of Social Agencies.

1944: Assembled and presented Christmas bags of nuts to soldiers at DeWitt General Hospital, Auburn, CA.

1946: A Chico Branch member attended, as an observer, meetings of the City Council, School Board of Education and other community organizations.

1947: A panel composed of Branch members discussed qualifications of a School Board Member at various organizations in Chico after an unspecified incident. Participated in furthering a constructive recreational program for Chico. Sponsored Camp Fire Girls groups.

1947-57: Held an annual tea for high school seniors to acquaint them with various colleges, encouraging them to continue their education.

1951: Began presenting children's music in schools such as Lesselli Marionettes.

1953: Hosted the first AAUW Northern California Regional Workshop held in this area.

1955: Co-sponsored outstanding women speakers in Chico such as Margaret Burke White and Margaret Alexander Dunn.

1957: Hosted the first State Workshop (AAUW.) held in Chico. Received "AWARD OF MERIT" from AAUW State Division on International Relations (1957-58).

1958: Through special efforts of Chico Branch, Chico State College graduates became eligible for AAUW membership. In the spring of 1959 the first tea was held for Chico State seniors to acquaint them with our organization. The Book Fair project was begun to raise money for our Fellowship Fund.

1959: Scholarships for high school women students were established. Sponsored meetings of The Great Decisions Program (sponsored nationally by The Foreign Policy Association); to bring great world issues down to the local level.

1959-61: Sponsored the Solo Theatre Series (Marjorie Washington) to raise money for AAUW new national headquarters building in Washington, D.C. and other educational projects. The Chico Branch Building Fund contribution (\$1,850.) was 100% of assessment from AAUW Headquarters. This committee was chaired by Virginia Smale..

1962: Sponsored a Chico City Schools Library study.

1963: Sponsored a marked nature trail in a 29 acre parcel of Bidwell Park and a long-range goal of a nature center and museum.

1966: Presented Art Appreciation lectures by Dr. Janet Turner, Professor of Art at Chico State University and an authority on print-making.

Received a Certificate of Participation in the national Project Head Start.

Began an annual dollar contribution to KIXE Educational TV, Channel 9

1967-68: Took the initiative in generating interest in the community to extend the California Scholarship program in the Jr. High Schools, Chico.

1969: Presented awards to Bidwell Jr. High School students

who were on the school's Honor Roll for 3 consecutive years. Assisted in the organization of The Chico Community Scholarship Association. The 1st committee included branch members Anne Lou Hall, Jane McCulloch, Robbie Amer and Aileen Glenn.

1970: Celebrated Chico Branch's 50th anniversary with a Golden Fall Tea.

1971: Sponsored the Ecology Fair in the Plaza Mall for the total community.

1973: Made a Food Price Survey (series of 3) which was published in local paper. Sponsored the appearance of Jennifer Cross Gans, author of The Supermarket Trap.

1974-75:

- Presented a Chico Branch Original Talent Show, illustrating the legal process of passing a bill in the Legislature.
- Held a Luau as a Branch Special Scholarship Fund-raiser.
- The Driving Force in formation of a Commission for Women in this area.
- The Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia Survey & Awards program invited one of our branch members to be one of their 65 correspondents throughout the U. S for TV and radio programs. Carol Mitchell served in this capacity for Children's TV and radio research (commercials and programs). As a culmination of this 2 yr. study of broadcast media, the Premiere of Spanish News & Public Information program on Chico Channel 12 TV was broadcast- September 27, 1974 by Ruth Smith.
- Conducted a Cereal Survey.
- Mardi Worley elected to Chico City Council

1975-76: Honored Mrs. Bruce McCulloch and Mrs. Eric Nielsen (both Branch members) by presenting them with a framed photo of the quilt block they designed for the Fellowship's International Friendship Quilt; a state-wide AAUW fund-raising project for Fellowships.

- Special Scholarship fund-raiser. Auction items donated by members.
- Cake raffle to support ERA, Florida Division.
- Carol Mitchell served on CSD Communications Committee and chaired this Workshop at the CSD Convention in April.
- Presented a Special Program on Nuclear Energy.
- Researched the quality of children's TV and radio

- commercials and programs.
- Members were driving force in the creation of a local Commission for Women that united a dozen women's service groups in the region.
- Joined with the PTA and the League of Women Voters in the California Coalition for Fair School Finance.

1980's: Produced a directory of local Women's Businesses.

- Increased scholarship collaborations with other Chico organizations.
- Member Valene Smith received the Community Athena Award.
- AAUW women formed a Woman in Technology focus group to study computers.
- Began a series of annual "Expanding Your Horizons in Math and Science" conferences for middle school girls.
- Member Peg Taylor was honored by community for her years as an advocate for senior citizen issues and for creating the adult day health care center that proudly bears her name today.
- Aggressively pursued local issues such as educational bond measures and became very active when county announced closure of city's public library.
- John Smale became the s first male branch member in 1987.

1990's: The Kitchen Tour became an outstanding and major fundraiser for AAUW Educational Foundation.

- Local Chico Soroptimists recognized Chico AAUW as an organization advancing the status of women.
- Activist women 70 years after the right to vote – continuing to work for equal opportunity
- National AAUW report on the lingering bias against women in the sciences brought out our activist women again: sponsored public panel discussion on issue, continued "Expanding Your Horizon" conference for middle school girls, was a sponsor for Chico Science Fair and continued in the Community Association scholarships begun 25 years ago.

2000's: Annual Tea Party or Antiques and Appraisal Fairs to raise money for Tech Trek scholarships.

- Annual Souper Suppers to discuss California Propositions and other election issues raising funds for AAUW Funds (Research and student Fellowships).
- In 2006 for Women's History Month members gave a presentation of "Gold Rush Women" to 4th graders in the Chico Unified School District

- Co-sponsored, with Butte College, a Science Conference for 8th graders, which later evolved into Career Trek and now Stem Adventure. Introduces STEM careers to over 200 8th grade girls and their parents each year.
- Participated in Science Fair for CUSD students, awarding two special awards each year.
- Co-sponsored (with the Soroptimists and the League of Women Voters) the Women's Finance Collaborative, which provides financial services to the poor who have no other banking resources. Sponsored a training program at CUSC "Elect Her", and "Running Start" to encourage women to enter politics and government
- Instigated (with Dr. Cindy Wolff) a federal civil rights investigation, citing alleged sexual discrimination against the CUSD, claiming that Chico high schools were out of compliance with Title IX, the 1972 gender equity law. This investigation found the allegation to be true, and issued a compliance order for CUSD, which it is implementing.
- Established a website: aauw-chico.org/, and FaceBook "AAUW Chico"
- Created an AAUW Community scholarship. Since 2013 this team has raised **\$66,000** and awarded **30** scholarships.
- Activated a "Start Smart Team" to present salary negotiation skills workshops to college students.
- Since 1998, Chico Tech Trek has sent **118** girls to summer STEM camps totaling more than **\$96,000** in camper scholarships.
- Monthly meetings focus on many topics to inform and advance the specific mission of AAUW, and educate members.
- Pay Equity - including Start Smart, Work Smart and other public policy issues such as health care and freedom from violence and assault. College and University Partnerships.
- Fund national research that will inform AAUW's public policy platform and programs on education and women's issues.
- Increasing the number of women and girls in STEM through research and advocacy –Tech Trek, Career Trek (Stem Adventure), Chico Science Fair.
- Established 3 Chico Branch Legacy Scholarships: Sydney Stewart Scholarship, Jackson-Heron Scholarship, Jana Lawton Scholarship.



American Association of University Women

100 YEARS

1920-2020

Chico Branch History

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. AAUW is headquartered in Wash., D.C.

Since AAUW was founded in 1881, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day-

- Educational
- Social
- Economic
- Political

<http://aauw-chico.org/>

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