

# The Chico AAUW Grapevine



American Association of University Women - Chico Branch Vol. 36 No. 6 Feb 2024

## Next Branch Event ...

### Book in Common Discussions

Monday, February 19, 2024 - 3 p.m.

Woodoak Condominium clubhouse - 555 Vallombrosa Avenue in Chico

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.

During the next few months, we will have an opportunity to delve deeply into a subject that has been in the news in numerous ways in the past few years: renaming of military bases, streets, and schools; banning the teaching of critical race theory; removal of Confederate flags flying over state capitols among others. Through the Book in Common program we can read, discuss, and learn about important issues facing the broader community. The Book in Common is chosen each year by a group of university faculty, staff, students, and community members and is designed to promote discussion and understanding. The book selected for 2024 is *How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning With the History of Slavery Across America*.

**READ** - Eve L. Ewing, Associate Professor at the University of Chicago noted that this book "Sheds light on the contested narratives beneath the surface of our collective national identity, inviting us to dig a little deeper, reminding us never to take received histories for granted." Think about the US history lessons you "received." The author, Clint Smith, is the winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, the Hillman Prize for Book Journalism, the Stowe Prize, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and selected by the New York Times as one of the 10 Best Books of 2021. The book is available for purchase at the campus bookstore and also at local bookstores.

**DISCUSS** - Join in on two conversation sessions facilitated by member **Carol Burr**. The February 19 session will cover the Prologue through Angola Prison. The March 18 session will cover Blandford Cemetery through Epilogue. Both conversations will be held at 3 p.m. at the Woodoak condominium club house located at 555 Vallombrosa, directly across from the post office. The visitor parking lot is on the left as you enter the main driveway. Club house is also to the left across from the parking lot.

**LEARN** - The author, Clint Smith, will speak at Laxson Auditorium on the CSU, Chico campus on April 11 at 7:30 p.m. These lectures usually include a lively question and answer session. If you want to attend with other branch members, please email Dori Moura by February 10th. She will purchase a block of seats for our group.



# Branch News and Notes

## Branch Leaders

- President - Sue Blizman
- Membership - Dori Moura
- Finance - Lyn Smith
- Secretary - Severance Dolan
- Program - Dori Moura  
Jan Britton
- Newsletter Editor - Jana Lawton
- Public Policy - Carol Holzgrafe
- Tech Trek Team - Katy Azevedo  
Pam Bodnar  
Sylvia Hedlind  
Carol Holzgrafe
- Diversity Team - Margaret Swick  
Jan Britton
- Technology - Helen Gesick  
Toni Reid
- Historian - Michelle Rasmussen

One of the newest interest sections is the Travel Group, coordinated by **Toni Reid**. Toni reports that there are travel plans afoot in February to visit museums in Oroville, in March to make a trip to the Crocker Museum in Sacramento, and a little long range planning for trips to Ashland, Oregon. If any of these group outings is of interest to you, contact Toni so you can get on their communications list.



The next planning meeting for the Antique Appraisal Faire will be held on February 12 at 10:30 a.m. at Sue Blizman's home. The committee is working on a new flyer to help publicize this community event which will be held at the Chico Women's Club on Sunday, March 24. The flyer will be included in the next edition of the *Grapevine* and will be in a format that can be copied and passed out by all members. This will be an easy way for members to help promote the event to friends and neighbors. The Faire is the primary way that our branch raises money to send our girls to Tech Trek camp.

The guest speaker at our January branch meeting, contractor Stefanie Olson owner of SheBuilds, told us how she gets satisfied customers in what is often a stressful activity - building or remodeling a home. They are kept in the loop in all scheduling and design decisions. No more wondering when the contractor will return to finish a job. No more unanticipated problems like placement of windows that have a view of a wall or appliances that open into a drawer or counter. Through her experience constructing hundreds of homes, Olson knows how to map out every detail so costs are not a surprise and the final product will make you happy.



I am currently our AAUW-Chico branch historian. We have numerous albums filled with news articles, newsletters and photos dating back to the mid 1930s. I have spoken to the librarian in charge of archives at Chico State about the possibility of archiving these records of our amazing contributions to the Chico community. Do any of you have news articles, photos, written memories, etc. you would like to transfer from your personal stash to our community archive? Anything that would make our branch history more complete will be appreciated. Please contact me if you have anything to share. Thank you, *Michelle Rasmussen*

## Membership News

This is the first month in a long time when we haven't had a new member to welcome to the branch. Because there have been so many new names to add to our directories since its publication last fall, **Helen Gesick** has created an "update" page you will be able to print out and add to your member booklet. Look for it via email in the next few days.

Invite prospective members to a meeting and/or pass on contact information to me and I will follow up. If you're on social media, be sure to like and share our posts on Facebook and Instagram. The more you interact with our content, the more likely potential new members will see it on their feeds.

*Dori Moura, Membership Chair*  
(530) 321-6508 or [dorimoura@yahoo.com](mailto:dorimoura@yahoo.com)



Longtime AAUW member **Valene Smith** died on January 16. The photo shows her in 2020 after receiving the Chico branch AAUW Named Gift Honoree award. An AAUW member since 1974, Valene's life and work exemplified dedication to exploration, education, and service. A legacy, which bears her name, is the Valene L. Smith Museum of Anthropology at Chico State. Her bequest in 2010 allowed the campus Museum of Anthropology to expand in size and relocate to the

heart of campus. The museum's vision, like Valene's, is to promote cultural awareness of the diversity of the human experience.

A celebration of her life will be held at the Museum (entrance is located across from the library) on Wednesday, February 14 - what would have been her 98th birthday - from 11:30 to 12:30 p.m.

**Amy White** was born in Boston and attended Denison University in Granville, Ohio, earning an MA in communications. She met her husband in Boston when they were both working for the Boston Beer Company. Beer is a big part of their lives, which is how they eventually ended up living in Chicago and then Chico (home to the Sierra Nevada Brewery). After much persistence home hunting, they found just what they wanted in Chico. Their home on Bidwell Avenue happens to have several other AAUW members living nearby. Word of mouth advertising is very effective and Amy decided to join AAUW. Amy and her husband have a son, currently in LA, and a daughter who, with her husband and 2 children, also lives in Chico.

Amy described her life as beer, children and, once in Chicago, a passion for nutrition health, which prompted her to pursue a masters degree in holistic nutrition. With this, she started her business in 2011 as a functional holistic nutritionist. She has since also become a certified life coach. You can learn more about how Amy combines her background in nutrition with her skills as a life coach at her website [The Simplicity of Wellness](#).

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## Membership News continued

(Amy White continued) Amy enjoys cooking, hiking, being on the water, playing with her family and working with her clients. She uses her more quiet moments to read and knit.

With the onset of COVID and a move to Chico, Amy found herself doing more work online, consulting with clients in ZOOM meetings. Feeling a bit isolated, Amy decided that joining AAUW would be perfect for her.

**Deborah Rosenow**, aka Debbie, was born in Mountain View and grew up in Corning. She attended CSU, Chico where she met her husband in a writing class. They have a daughter who lives in Chico working as an environmental scientist and their son is a mechanical and materials engineer in Sunnyvale.

Teaching in the math department at Pleasant Valley High School (PV), Debbie realized the importance of making girls feel comfortable with math. She was impressed with how much we did for the high school girls when she became aware of our Tech Trek program. She often had more girls than boys in her trigonometry and pre-calculus classes. She emphasized for her students the importance of identifying their interests and then doing something to develop that interest. She promoted STEM for everyone. She particularly encouraged girls and first generation students to go for it.

Debbie was an adviser for the after-school club “Girls Who Code.” She brought a 3D printer to her classroom so students could create projects and learn about coding. She presented weekly riddles and puzzles to promote problem solving and thinking outside of the box. Her classroom was filled with encouraging posters of STEM careers so females (or any student) could map out a pathway and accept the challenge schools provide. Interestingly, PV has often had more female faculty members in the Math Department which leads to a high interest on the part of the female students.

Now retired, Debbie finds herself doing lots of outdoor stuff including camping, fishing, hiking, kayaking, traveling, and reading. Debbie truly appreciates that AAUW advocates for women, supporting them to reach beyond typical gender roles.

**Carol Holzgrafe** reports that Debbie has agreed to join the staff at Tech Trek CSU Monterey Bay, Camp Rachel Carson, in July. As a retired math teacher experienced with middle school girls too, she will bring insight which we will need. Monterey Peninsula member Sharyn Siebert and Carol are planning an entirely new camp in an entirely new area. So far it is going well. Chico member, **Katy Azevedo**, will also work as a dorm mom at Camp Carson this summer.

Tech Trek Davis, which our Chico girls will attend, will continue to offer an exciting and varied schedule for the 90 lucky 8th graders who will descend upon that campus on July 14. Dorm moms (adult counselors) are still needed for this camp to ride herd on about 12 Tech Trekkers, 13 years old and VERY interesting. Time involved: Saturday, July 13 through noon of Saturday July 20. Food is excellent, and each day brings different experiences. While the campus is entirely flat, there is quite a lot of walking. Dorms are newish and have air conditioning. Are you interested in having a job description? Contact Carol Holzgrafe.



## Public Policy



AAUW California and AAUW National regularly present webinars on topics members will find informative and, sometimes, riveting. One such is the upcoming, February 4 presentation called “Mary Church Terrell and the Fight to Integrate AAUW.”

Learn about Black activist Mary Church Terrell, her work for women’s suffrage and racial equality, and her role in the integration of AAUW. A co-founder of the NAACP, Terrell became the first Black member of AAUW after winning an anti-discrimination lawsuit. We will hear from Dr. Alison Parker, author of *Unceasing Militant: The Life of Mary Church Terrell*, as she recounts stories and major successes in the life of this extraordinary woman.



The focus on inclusion now is important because we will all be asked to vote soon on eliminating the degree requirement for AAUW membership, so anyone can join in our cause for education and equity for all women and girls and in our work for our communities.

Sunday, February 4 at 3 p.m. on Zoom. To register go to [aauw-ca.org](http://aauw-ca.org), scroll down to the Mary Church Terrell section and click to register. The link to join will magically appear in your email’s In Box.

Another Zoom production is School Boards: The Battleground for the Education Culture Wars Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2024 4 p.m. Across the country, we have seen school boards, and candidates for school boards, taking up controversial policies that have led to banning books from school libraries; the censorship of curriculum in school classrooms due to individuals finding content “objectionable”; and policies leading to the prevention of safe school climates for students of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Join the AAUW National Public Policy Committee webinar to learn how one AAUW state board is fighting back and what you can do locally. NOTE You can register for these webinars almost up to the time they begin. And...if you miss seeing one, you can watch a recording in a few days. Go to [aauw-ca.org](http://aauw-ca.org), click on ‘Webinars’ at the top of the page, then find what you are looking for.

*Public Policy Chair, Carol Holzgrafe*

Lend your voice and urge members of Congress to support the Healthy Families Act (H.R. 3409/S. 1664) and keep America’s working families healthy and economically secure.

Nearly 1 in 4 private sector employees, and more than six in 10 of the lowest-income workers, don’t have even a single paid sick day. That means getting the flu or having a sick child creates a precarious choice: go to work sick (or send a sick child to school) or stay home and risk not being able to pay for groceries or rent. For the typical family without paid sick days, just 3.5 sick days without pay is equivalent to losing an entire month of groceries. Having a national paid sick days standard would provide working women with more job stability and the economic security they need to take care of themselves and their families. Ask Congress to keep America’s working families healthy and economically secure this flu season and every season.



## Branch News and Notes continued

Check out the newly revamped AAUW California website, devoid of duplications, broken links, and thickets of navigation. You can now find almost anything you want to know with three little clicks.

Go to [aauw-ca.org/](http://aauw-ca.org/) Find the little words at the very top: these are your doors into AAUW CA Land. In case they ask, the password is [aauwca](http://aauwca.org/). (no hyphen). To find out about Tech Trek, Speech Trek, or Gov Trek, click on Programs/Projects and, like magic, the three programs' logos appear. Click on them and you'll find anything you want including a link to the volunteer application. (Hint, hint).

If you are interested in a branch board job or, if you already have one, click on Branch Tools and you'll find boxes which open the doors to Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Being a Branch Officer. Finance, Leadership Resources (the big one) or Webinars (newly organized for finding one useful to you – try the search box or scroll down to see what wonders appear.

If you are looking for help with a branch problem, check Leader on Loan. Read all about it, then fill out the request form and submit. I'm in charge of this for the next few months. And don't overlook forms and templates. All in one place. And, if you still have questions, check AskUsFirst. I would like to mention that this new look and ease of use is the result of hours and hours and hours of hard work by your AAUW CA board of directors and their committees (I helped). They did a good job. If you would like a private tour of this site, just let me know.

*Carol Holzgrafe*

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Treasurer, Lyn Smith, reminds us that tickets for the Orient and Flume vase drawing are still available. You could have this beautiful vase (pictured at left) for your own or to give as a gift. Orient and Flume is a world renowned local maker of fine art glass. Drawing for the vase will be held at the Antique Appraisal Faire on March 24. All proceeds will benefit the Chico AAUW scholarships for CSU, Chico students working towards a teaching credential in STEM subjects.

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Selection of the Summer 2024 Tech Trek nominees is well underway. Chico Country Day and Chico, Bidwell, and Marsh Junior High School teachers are considering which five amazing female students will be the best candidates from their 7th grade classes for the UC Davis residential camp and the Virtual Camp.

Our Tech Trek committee will interview five girls from each school site before making our final selections in March. Six girls will attend the Davis camp and several others will attend the Virtual Camp.

It is always difficult to choose among the wonderful girls who demonstrate strong interest in STEM areas. The camps offer them an incredible opportunity to interact with other like minded young ladies from across the North State. Thanks to all our school site partners.

*Pam Bodnar & Carol Holzgrafe*  
AAUW Chico Tech Trek



# Interest Sections for Lifelong Learning . . . and Fun

## *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**

Carol Holzgrafe  
The group usually meets Tuesdays, Thursdays, and/or Saturdays at 8:30 or 9:30 a.m. depending on the season. A walking/talking group of Chico and Paradise members who wander through parks and neighborhoods. Email or call for schedule.

## **Wine and Whine**

Carol Holzgrafe  
Meets the 3rd Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.  
Feb 21 - Sicilian Cafe - 240 Wall St downtown. Come, bring a friend, share snacks, and enjoy wine or non-alcoholic drinks with us. Don't forget to RSVP and please bring cash to avoid splitting charges among 8-12 cards.

## **Women's Microfinance**

Jana Lawton  
Contact Jana if you are interested in this group. Semi annual meetings

## **Out to Lunch**

Mary Huntsinger  
Group meets on 2nd Thursday @ 11:30  
Call or text Mary for location and to make a reservation. Both Paradise and Chico branch members welcome.

## **Culture Club**

Dori Moura  
Seeking out cultural opportunities of all kinds and sharing them with friends. Contact Dori to get on the distribution list to learn of potential outings.

## **Wordsmiths**

Dori Moura  
Meets 2nd Sunday at 2 p.m.  
All writers welcome.  
Feb 11 - hosted by Nancy Prazler.  
Come and find an eager audience for what you're writing.

## **Foreign Policy Discussion Group**

Group meets 4th Monday at 6:30 p.m.  
Feb 26 - *Risky Science Across Borders* hosted by Kelley Crockett.

## **Evening Book Discussion Group**

Elaine Schlinger  
Group meets at 7:00 p.m. on 2nd Tuesday  
Feb 13 - *Rosary Colored Glasses* by Janet Rossi Tezak. Hosted by Mary Huntsinger.

## **Ethnic Writers Book Discussion Group**

Severance Dolan  
Group meets at 1:00 p.m. on 4th Wednesday  
Feb 28 - *An Improbable Friendship: Remarkable Lives of Israeli Ruth Dayan and Palestinian Raymonda* by Anthony David. Hosted by Severance Dolan **New members welcome.**

## **Nonfiction Book Discussion Group**

Group meets on 1st Friday at 10 a.m.  
Contact Carol Krok

## **Mystery Book Discussion Group**

Denise Worth  
Group meets at 3 p.m. on 3rd Wednesday  
Feb 21 - *Murder in Chianti* by Camilla Tranchieri. Hosted by Mary Huntsinger. **New members welcome.**

## **Friday Book Discussion Group**

Severance Dolan  
Group meets at 10 a.m. on 4th Friday at Woodoak condominiums club house  
Feb 23 - *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton. **New members welcome.**

## **Bridge Group**

Kathy Sweet  
Meets 2nd Monday at 1 p.m.  
Group plays for fun with the goal of improving their games. Substitutes always needed.

## **Computer and iPad Group**

Helen Gesick  
Meets 3rd Tuesday at 2:00



The *GRAPEVINE* is published by the Chico branch of AAUW. Items for inclusion can be sent to newsletter editor, Jana Lawton, at [jdlawton72@gmail.com](mailto:jdlawton72@gmail.com)

# Connect with AAUW



**Chico AAUW Social Media**  
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Instagram [aauw\\_chico](#)  
Email [aauw.chico@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.chico@gmail.com)



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