



# The Chico AAUW Grapvine

American Association of University Women - Chico Branch - Vol. 37 No. 5 FEB 2026

## GENDER EQUITY IN SPORTS AND TITLE IX UNDER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 5 PM  
BUTTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
1108 SHERMAN AVE.

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 education institution.

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks 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.

Chico's AAUW will host a discussion on *Gender Equity in Sports Under the Trump Administration*. Dr. Cindy Wolff will address an update on equity in sports in Chico. In 2012, Wolff and the Chico AAUW branch submitted a complaint to the California Office of Civil Rights, under Title IX, concerning the equity of women's sports in the Chico Unified School District (CUSD). Wolff did this while concomitantly serving as a Chico State faculty member and as the founder of the non-profit Center for Healthy Communities. As a result of the complaint, girls in Chico now have the same access to sports facilities that boys have always had. And, the Center garnered more than \$50 million in grants and contracts to provide services to Northstate residents.



The Trump administration is in the process of shutting down the Department of Education that helped provide some funding for Title IX. Because of this, Wolff will address questions concerning how the original 2012 complaint affected sports gender equity in our tri-county region, how Title IX affected sports gender equity requirements in the CUSD, and how the Trump administration affects funding for gender equity in sports.



# Message from the Co-presidents

## 2024-2025 Branch Leaders

Presidents –

Jana Lawton  
Michelle Rasmussen

Membership –

Mary Huntsinger  
Anne Russell

Finance –

Severance Dolan

Secretary –

Program –

Dori Moura  
Jan Britton

Newsletter Editor –

Anne Russell

Public Policy –

Carol Holzgrafe

Tech Trek Team –

Katy Azevedo

Pam Bodnar

Debbie Rosenow

Carol Holzgrafe

Diversity Team –

Margaret Swick

Jan Britton

High School Scholarships –

Marilyn Myrick

College Scholarships –

Jan Britton

Website –

Helen Gesick

Toni Reid

Historian –

Michelle Rasmussen

Hello Friends,

Our January meeting was attended by well over 100 community members. It took a lot of time and effort to pull together such an informative program with knowledgeable speakers. Appreciation goes to Jeannie Trizzino, who was an active member of the planning committee, and Janet Rechtman, Toni Reid, Helen Gesick, and Marcia Moore who were wearing both their AAUW and League of Women Voters' hats. We hope you'll want to continue learning about our state's water issues by participating in the Book in Common discussion in March.



Did you ever find yourself wondering what a “woke” agenda was? It is often portrayed as something that is objectionable, something to be rooted out of our politics, our educational system, our military, our workplaces, and institutions. The word’s origins are rooted in African American culture. Black people had to be awake, aware, paying attention to, and conscious of racial injustice and institutional inequality. Oftentimes their lives or well-being depended on being *woke*.

Current usage has seemingly morphed the word into an epithet. It’s a catch-all phrase used in our culture war to include “stuff we don’t like,” that is, talk about gender, race, climate change, history, among others. Our country has never had cultural values, beliefs, or ideologies in which there was 100% agreement. Over time norms change as we strive for that more perfect union. People with a woke agenda seek to change the status quo, or one which puts them in a position with less access to things like jobs, education, healthcare, housing, and transportation.

People who disparage others as being “woke” don’t want the status quo to change. They like the privilege and power they have. Fortunately, achieving equity is not a zero sum proposition. That is why AAUW believes in, and advocates for, DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion). Think about the beautiful meanings of those three words,

**INCLUSION** - embrace differences so that individuals or groups feel welcome, respected, supported, valued and able to fully participate.

**EQUITY** - the quality of being fair and just.

**DIVERSITY** - psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals. Our country is populated with people with differences such as mental and physical abilities, socioeconomic status, marital status, ethnicity, gender, and religions. All of these physical, social, and cultural characteristic *can* coexist.

Embrace the DEI vision in your daily lives and do what you can in your corner of the world to advance that AAUW vision for the good of all. Remember, a small pebble thrown into a big lake has a wide “ripple effect.”

Michelle Rasmussen and Jana Lawton  
AAUW Chico co-presidents

# Membership News

## INTERBRANCH COUNCIL LUNCHEON SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2026, 11:30 AM

### AAUW Social Media

If you are on social media, be sure to like and share our posts on

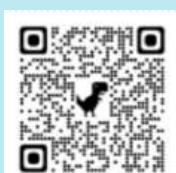
Facebook – [AAUW Chico](#)

Instagram – [@aauw\\_chico](#)

Our email at  
[aauwchico@gmail.com](mailto:aauwchico@gmail.com)

Our website –  
[chico-ca.aauw.net](http://chico-ca.aauw.net)

Or  
Scan this code with your phone for more information



The more you interact with our content, the more likely potential new members will see it on their feeds.

Susan Critchfield

The North Valley Interbranch Council (IBC) gives us the opportunity to share information about challenges and successes. AAUW attracts amazing people from all walks of life who are committed to education and equity for women and girls so it is a real treat to be able to share food and conversation with members of the Gridley, Oroville, Paradise, Marysville/Yuba City, and Redding branches.

Our host this year is the Marysville/Yuba City branch. They arranged to have the meeting at Hillcrest Catering, located at 210 Julie Drive in Yuba City. The venue is behind the Hillcrest Plaza building with plenty of parking. Branch members will carpool. If you're interested, sign up as a rider, driver, or either and we will work out the logistics. Menu is as follows: buffet with one vegetarian dish, two entrees, salads, rolls, dessert, water, coffee, and tea. The caterer would appreciate knowing if you want the vegetarian entree. **Cost: \$37**

Make your reservation now for the IBC luncheon by sending a check for \$37, made payable to AAUW Chico, to Jana Lawton. You can also give her cash or check if you attend our branch meeting on February 23. She will give the final head count for the caterer on Friday, February 27. No reservations can be accepted after that date.

Guest speaker is unconfirmed at this date. We have requested a speaker who is a recipient of one of the AAUW fellowships studying in California but don't have a confirmation. We will shift to Plan B if we don't hear soon. Either way, the speaker will be someone who engages us on an interesting topic.



## COMING SOON - ANTIQUE APPRAISAL FAIRE

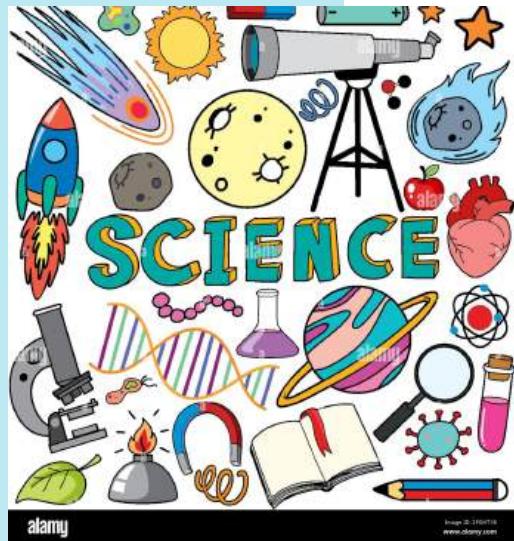
**CHICO WOMEN'S CLUB - 592 E. 3<sup>RD</sup> ST.  
SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026 FROM 11 AM TO 3 PM**

Spread the word to neighbors and friends about this opportunity to have treasures appraised. You may also have your own heirloom and would appreciate learning a bit more about how and when it was made and its current value. Especially if you plan to pass it on to the next generation, having some provenance about the gift makes it much more interesting for the recipient.



# Membership News - cont'd

## SUPPORT STUDENTS AT SIERRA VIEW SCHOOL



Butte County no longer has a traditional science fair, but teachers at Sierra View Elementary School have been continuing the tradition. Last year, they had 70 students participate in 45 projects! The parents and school faculty want to encourage them to stay curious and be life-long scientists who understand how to use the scientific method.

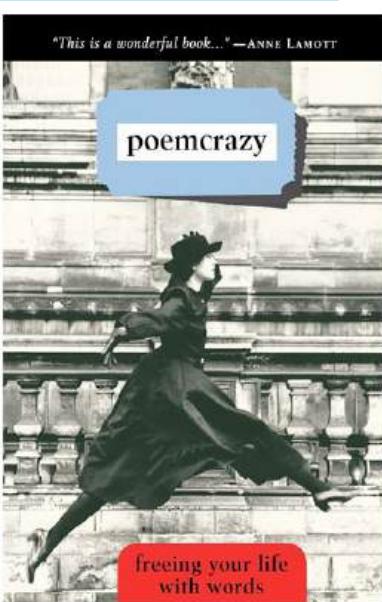
**The Fair this year will take place in their Multipurpose Room on Tuesday, February 17. Judging takes place from 8:30 to 11 am.**

They are looking for local scientists and/or scientifically-minded people to help judge student projects. Participation in judging can be very flexible. You are welcome to come and judge as many projects as you have time for during that time frame. In the past, volunteers have come for as little as 45 minutes while others have stayed the whole time so they could judge each project. At the start, you will be given a rubric to use while awarding points to each project in various categories. No students will be present during the judging.

In the past, our branch has had non-scientist members judge projects so it is not difficult. It is definitely fun to see what young minds come up with as they explore science. Our branch awards two certificates of merit along with \$25 gift cards from Barnes and Noble for two students we agree put out a commendable effort on their projects. **Let Jana know if you are interested in volunteering before Feb 17 so she can contact the school coordinator.**



## FREE WRITING WORKSHOP



Susan Wooldridge delights in helping others write with what poet Anne Waldman calls “goofy profundity.” Susan has been sponsored for many years by California Poets in the Schools and by Poets & Writers, an organization known for its commitment to promoting literature and enhancing the visibility of writers and their work.

- Her book *poemcrazy*—freeing your life with words is in a 35<sup>th</sup> Random House printing.
- Her book on creative process, *Foolsgold*, is filled with small collage boxes.
- Her chapbook *Bathing with Ants* is chock full of animals.

AND because she wants to share her love of writing, Susan Wooldridge is offering a workshop to AAUW members on Sunday, February 22 at 1:30. There is no cost but you might look into purchasing any of the above mentioned books at Barnes and Noble to become better acquainted with her and her work. Susan will bring tools and techniques designed to help you feel excited about writing. She has found that in a safe, free setting, surrounded with words, most everyone can write poems that bring delight and discovery. Call or email Jana if you want to attend. This will be a fun experience even if you aren't an aspiring writer. Bring your pen.

# Membership News - cont'd

## JOIN AAUW'S LEGACY CIRCLE

Could AAUW be part of your legacy? If you find yourself in the happy position of having accumulated more assets than you will need in retirement, you can continue the important work of AAUW through a *Charitable Gift Annuity* (CGA). Creating a CGA is just one of the many ways you can join AAUW's Legacy Circle. Membership in the Legacy Circle starts with a planned gift to AAUW, which can be done in many ways. This article gives a few highlights of the CGA. For more information, click [here](#).

Through a Charitable Gift Annuity, you make a donation to AAUW and in return, you receive fixed payments for the rest of your life. You're able to make a gift that pays you back, while supporting the work of achieving equity for women and girls. Some benefits of choosing a CGA include

- Security of lifetime payments
- Payment rates will never change, regardless of the economy
- Flexibility to choose when to start receiving payments
- Additional tax savings if you fund your gift with appreciated stocks held for more than a year
- If you are 70 1/2 or older, you can use a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA to fund a CGA



## UPDATES

**TTAG Advisory Board Meeting:** Eight officers, three general members, and two advisors met on Jan 6 at Pleasant Valley High School. The newly appointed officers are learning their roles and how to conduct meetings. They had very thoughtful ideas and suggestions. View minutes [here](#). Next general TTAG meeting is Feb 6 at Chico High School.

**TTAG Mission Statement, finalized at the advisory board meeting:** TTAG focuses on local alumnae in grades 8-12+ to help build community through service, to develop leadership, explore and expand STEM opportunities, and provide connections and support through high school and beyond.

**Looking ahead:** NASA virtual watch party (Jan 24) plus live Q&A session (Jan 27) with astrophysicist Dr. Charity Woodrum of Oregon AAUW. Upcoming STEM event at Chico State on Feb 13 in cooperation with Chico State Women in Construction and College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management. Volunteer work at Antique Appraisal Faire on Mar 22 and Chico Community Food Locker on Apr 11.

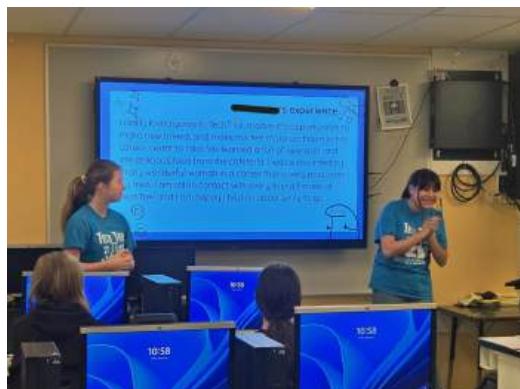
**Presentations:** Trekkers that attended camp in 2025 have been busy creating presentations about their summer experience at Davis and Santa Cruz. They are building their public speaking skills by talking to teachers and 7<sup>th</sup> grade potential nominees about Tech Trek. We appreciate their enthusiasm as they help us with the Tech Trek nomination process.

Please send questions/comments/suggestions to [TechTrekChico@gmail.com](mailto:TechTrekChico@gmail.com) if you would like to become involved with TTAG. We can use volunteers to occasionally help carpool students to meetings and events on weekdays. Recommendations for local women involved in STEM are also appreciated so we can start some local networking. Thanks!

Jan 6 TTAG advisory board



8<sup>th</sup> grade trekkers presenting to potential 7<sup>th</sup> grade nominees at Bidwell Junior HS



# Public Policy/Social Action

## 2026 NEW ELECTIONS

Because of the untimely death of Congressman Doug LaMalfa, we have two elections coming up—with two completely different sets of rules. The summer election to fill the Congressional District 1 seat until January will be held under the *old* district lines. The November election for the full two-year term will see our district separated from some more northern counties and added to a few over by the coast. Confusing, yes, but very, very interesting. So far, Assemblyman James Gallagher and Chico's own Audrey Denney plan to run. So, enter AAUW.



Members of AAUW Chico's Lobby Day team are planning to meet with staff members for Assemblyman Gallagher (AD 3) and State Senator Megan Dahle (S1) – or, in the best of all possible circumstances—with Gallagher and Dahle in person.

During these meetings in local district offices, the Lobby Day Team will discuss three bills before the California Senate and Assembly. Team members will have talking points on why AAUW does or does not support a particular bill and ask for the member's vote in that direction.

Our Lobby Day team includes two members from the Marysville-Yuba City branch and three from Chico: co-branch president Michelle Rasmussen, newsletter editor Anne Russell, and public policy chair Carol Holzgrafe.

Based on last year's experience, we look forward to lively discussions about legislation of great interest to AAUW California.

Carol Holzgrafe

# Public Policy/Social Action

**AAUW California Public Policy Symposium**

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## THE SCHOOL BOARD PROJECT: DEFENDING THE FRONTLINE OF DEMOCRACY

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 **Saturday, Jan 31<sup>st</sup>**

 **9am - 12:30pm** Virtual

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**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:**  
Concerned parents and guardians, educators, nonprofits, civic leaders, advocates, equity activists, legal advisors, media, local and state agencies.  
AAUW members are encouraged to attend, but membership is not required.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SCHOOL BOARD PROJECT**  
[aauw-ca.org/school-board-project-toolkit/](http://aauw-ca.org/school-board-project-toolkit/)

**publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org**  
[aauw-ca.org/public-policy](http://aauw-ca.org/public-policy)

**FREE  
PUBLIC EVENT  
REGISTER HERE**



**2025-2026**  
**AAUW**  
OF CALIFORNIA  
**PUBLIC POLICY**

## *Public Policy/Social Action cont'd*



### **Try Something New!**

- Turn your passion into impact
- Help guide our mission at the state level
- Be a part of exciting new programs

**Join the AAUW California Team**

**Apply now**

*Applications close March 14, 2026*

**Board Secretary**

**One-Year Director**

**Two-Year Director 4 positions**



*For job descriptions and to apply  
use the QR code*

or contact Sharyn at:

[branch-development@aauw-ca.org](mailto:branch-development@aauw-ca.org)

# Interest Groups for Fun ... and Learning



**NOTE: Use the AAUW directory for contact information  
or email [aauwchico@gmail.com](mailto:aauwchico@gmail.com)**

## LES FLANEURS

Carol Holzgrafe (email/call for schedule and more information). A walking/talking tour of Chico and Paradise. Usually meets Tues, Thur, and/or Sat @ 8:30 or 9:30 am, depending on the season.

## WINE AND WHINE

Carol Holzgrafe (text/email for more information). Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed, Feb 18, @ 5:30 pm at *Hotel Diamond*, 220 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Bring a friend, share snacks, and enjoy wine or other drinks with us. Please RSVP and bring cash to avoid the check crazies.

## OUT TO LUNCH

Mary Huntsinger (call/text for location and to make a reservation). Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Thur, Feb 12 @ 11:30 am at *Café Coda*, 265 Humboldt Ave. *Paradise and Chico branch members welcome!*

## WOMEN'S MICROFINANCE

Jana Lawton (call if interested in joining). Semi-annual meetings.

## WORDSMITHS

Jana Lawton (call for more information). Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun, Feb 8, @ 2 pm, hosted by Lily Loughlin. *All are welcome for listening to stories, reading, and talking about writing!*

## FOREIGN POLICY DISCUSSION

Jeannie Trizzino (text for more information). Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Mon, Feb 16, @ 6:30 pm. Jeannie Trizzino will lead the discussion on US Engagement with Africa. Jana Lawton will host. *Note this date is a change from our usual meeting time. New members welcome. Come and listen in before deciding.*

## EVENING Book DISCUSSION

Elaine Schlanger (text for more information). Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues, Jan 14, @ 7 pm in a member's home. Will discuss *Crashing Through* by Robert Kurson.

## ETHNIC WRITERS Book DISCUSSION

Severance Dolan (call for more information). Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Wed @ 10 am in a member's home. Will discuss *Two Under the Indian Sun*, by sisters Jan and Rumer Godden. Hosted by Severance Dolan. *New members welcome!*

## FRIDAY Book DISCUSSION

Severance Dolan (email for more information). Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Fri @ 10 am in Woodoak condominium clubhouse. Will discuss *The Let Them Theory*, by Mel Robbins. *New members welcome!*

## WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON Book DISCUSSION (NEW)

Mary Huntsinger (call/text for more information). Meets Feb 11 @ 2-4 pm. Will discuss *Take My Hand* by Dolan Perkins-Valdez.

## NONFICTION Book DISCUSSION

Carol Krok (text for more information). Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Fri, Jan 3, @ 9:30 am in a member's home for socializing; discussion starts promptly @ 10. *Currently at capacity.*

## MYSTERY Book DISCUSSION

Lyn Smith (text/email for more information). Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed, Feb 18, @ 3 pm in a member's home. Will discuss *The Survivors* by Jane Harper, hosted by Lyn. *New or interested members welcome!*

## BRIDGE

Sylvia Hedlind (text/call if interested in joining). Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon, Jan 13, @ 1 pm. Group plays for fun with the goal of improving members' games. *Substitutes always needed!*

## IPHONE/IPAD

Helen Gesick (text for more information). Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues @ 2 pm. Bring your questions.