



# Sequoia News

## September AAUW Program September 16, 2021

### Notes from the Presidents: Susan Cunningham & Maile Melkonian

“Uncertainty is the only certainty there is...” John Allen Paulos

Welcome back to a new year with Visalia-Sequoia AAUW! We are still grappling with the uncertainties of Covid-19 surges, but Maile and I are hoping to have a full calendar of activities this year. We kept our Zoom membership, just in case, but in-person meetings are our goal. Our balance of risk and safety is precarious; we’re forging ahead cautiously, but optimistically.

Our theme this year is “Inclusion and Equity.” We will continue to support AAUW’s mission of equity for all while encouraging diversity through including others. What will this mean for members? Locally, we want YOU to welcome guests to our general meetings. And not just prospective members! ANYONE who would benefit or enjoy our presentations should be invited. We want to enrich our membership, but also our community as a whole. If your guest says yes, be sure to let the Program Committee know the number of guests and adjust your payment accordingly when you sign up. Hopefully, we can broaden the impact of our expert presenters by including others in our audience.

Your board and committees worked this summer to prepare for a great year! Thank you to Susan Franciskovich and Donna Nottingham for developing our budget, approved by the budget committee and then the full board. We will vote as a branch for the budget in September. Thank you to our Program Vice-Presidents: Phyllis Matteson, Susan Mathews, and Sherri Bentley for lining up a promising set of programs. Thank you to Jan Johnson, Sandy Parmelly, and the book sorters for restarting the Lifestyles pick ups and for working tirelessly to prepare for the book sale

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**PRESENTER:** Dr. Luz Gonzalez  
Dean of Fresno State  
Visalia Campus

**PROGRAM:** Helping All Students Earn a  
College Degree

**DATE & TIME:** September 16 at 4:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Lamp Liter Inn

**COST:** \$15.00 for hors d'oeuvres

Dr. Gonzalez has held numerous appointments and committees. Her training and experiences are in teacher education, student success, community and regional engagement and undergraduate mentoring.

A former migrant farmworker, Dr. Gonzalez is passionate about helping all students earn a college education, especially those from traditionally underserved and disadvantaged communities.

**Please send your reservations by September 11th to:**

**Phyllis Matteson**  
**3320 S Hall St**  
**Visalia 93277**  
**Phone: 732-1988**  
**Text: 300-5022**  
**Email: [rapmat@aol.co](mailto:rapmat@aol.co)**



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starting October 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Allison Babcock for creating our book sale volunteer sign up sheet, which should be available on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Thank you to Suzanne Babcock for updating and distributing the yard signs for the sale. You can pick up yours at our first general meeting on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Maile Melkonian for compiling the information for our new directory, coming soon to a meeting near you!

The past year and a half have been full of loss, pain, suffering, and uncertainty. We'll do our best to turn the corner to brighter and better times together.

Thank you

Co-Presidents Susan Cunningham and Maile Melkonian

**See you soon!**

## **FINALLY!** **AAUW Book Sale Is Coming -** **October 5-10th**

Yes, Ladies, our book sale is returning!! Our book sorters have been sorting faithfully on Mondays at the warehouse and, as you might imagine, we have a TON of books to sell. From the comments we've heard at our drop off box, it seems that the public is anxious for our sale to resume too.

Our sell dates are set — October 5-10 at Sequoia Mall as usual with load in October 4 and clean up October 11. And, as usual, we need your help. There are two ways you can sign up for a work shift - online or at our first meeting of the year September 16. Alison Babcock will post the work schedule WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8. Look for an email blast with instructions for the online signups on that date. First come, first serve.

It's been a long time since we've all been together. I hope this finds you well and ready to get together once again. Let's bring books back to Tulare County!

## **BOOK SALE SIGNS...**

Our annual book sale will be held this year from October 5-10 at the Sequoia Mall (pending COVID restrictions).

We **NEED** to get the word out...and we do this by placing signs in yards around the city. In order to do this we **MUST HAVE** your help.

Signs will be available to check out at our first meeting on September 16. They can be placed in your yard, your friend's yard, your neighbor's yards and any place else that gives you permission. They can be placed out anytime after September 16.

If you want to pick up signs after that date they can be picked up at 3224 S. Ernest on Sept. 20 and 24 from 10-12, and also on Sept 22 from 2-4.

***Your help is essential to the success of our sale... without this advertising we will not be able to fund the scholarships as we have done in the past.***

Please remember that the signs also need to be taken down by October 11, collected and returned to AAUW after the sale.

## **AAUW SUNSHINE**

If you know of anyone that needs some "sunshine" please contact Renella Smith at (559) 260-9646 or [gregrensmith@gmail.com](mailto:gregrensmith@gmail.com).

Remember to let her know if you hear of any of our members who need a lift, have been ill, had surgery or suffered a loss. Thank you.



I am sorry to report the sad news that our longtime friend and AAUW member, Margo Tressler, has passed away. She died peacefully at home, Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, under Hospice care. Margo was an Honorary Life member, having joined AAUW in 1965. She served as co-president twice; once with Dona Meinhardt in 2001-02 and again with Louise Ford in 2005-06. The Book Sale was started by her with the book sorting being done on her picnic table in the back yard. She was active in many groups including, Girls' Gourmet, Traveling Troopers and as a Bridge coordinator/instructor. She will be missed.

Jean Moritz

## Special Interest Group

### Tech Trek

In July two 7th grade girls, both from La Joya, attended a statewide, week long Virtual Tech Trek Camp. They each earned the three following certificates for their excellent participation in the camp.

- *Qualcomm Thinkabit Lab/AAUW [certificate of achievement](#) for 15 hours of coding and circuit design, verified via upload of invention video or other coach-confirmed sharing of creation*
- *AAUW [certificate of completion](#) of the Tech Trek Program requiring: attendance at morning sessions, submission of final video, attendance at all mandatory and two optional workshops (minimum), and completion of post survey.*
- *["SuperSTEMinists"](#) for girls who EXCEEDED requirements and attended EVERY optional workshop in addition to all the mandatory sessions and the video upload.*

The girls showed dedication and perseverance in order to receive these!

We also had a 2018 camper from Green Acres, who reached out last Spring to find out if there were any opportunities to be involved in the 2021 summer's camp. There was! She became a "Build Coach" which means she worked with small groups via Zoom to complete activities. She worked at all three of the Virtual Camps and received a stipend for each one.

I hope all is well with you!

Jeanne Evans

Coffee & CA Concerns from Maile: This group needs for a volunteer to step forward. I am beginning my duties as co-president, and must step down from chairing C&CC. This is my favorite Branch section, and I have very much enjoyed organizing it for the past five years. Topics and speakers are arranged by C&CC participants, so the chair's function is largely communication. Of course, I will brief any volunteer (or volunteers--co-chairs?) who would like to do this. Thank-you.

## COFFEE & CALIFORNIA CONCERNS

Now that we've all weathered the summer, it's time to gear up for another season of fascinating discussions on state- and local-level policy topics of concern to us all. We hope to be meeting once a month this year, beginning Sept. 27:

**Mon., Sept. 27, 10:15am**

**Topic: "Redistricting 101: Why You Should Care"**  
**Speaker: Dr. Lucia Vazquez, Consultant to the Tulare Co. Advisory Commission on Supervisorial Redistricting**

Talk about timely! This session comes one week before the Commission holds a Working Meeting in Visalia for public review of their draft maps. Redistricting happens only once every decade, subsequent to the constitutionally-mandated decennial Census. After each Census, population shifts necessitate the redrawing of district boundaries at every level of government--from Congress to local cemetery districts. Tulare Co. and its Advisory Commission have been lauded (on NPR and elsewhere) for being "a model of transparency in their process," by the Dolores Huerta Foundation, among others. Come hear how it's being done, and why you should care.

## The Unabridged Book Club

The Unabridged Book Club was able to meet in-person the last few months! What a treat! Shown here at the home of Susan Cunningham to discuss the book Migrations by Charlotte McConaghy.



# DID YOU KNOW Your Board Members?

## Who should you call with questions about our branch of AAUW?

Here are your new Visalia-Sequoia AAUW officers for the 2021-2022 year:

Co-Presidents	Susan Cunningham (559) 901-5545 Maile Melkonian (559) 802-3315
President Elect	Lisa Silva (559) 786-3280 TBD
Program Vice Presidents	Susan Mathews (559) 731-8074 Phyllis Matteson (559) 300-5022 Sherri Bentley (559) 288-5429
Membership VP	Suzanne Babcock (559) 303-9394
Membership Treasurer	Jean Moritz (559) 627-5520
Treasurer	Donna Nottingham (559) 804-4590
Financial Director	Susan Franciskovich (559) 734-1030
Honored Member Fund VP	Nancy Holmes (559) 901-7536
Secretary	Marsha Brooks-Smith (559) 741-1165
Communications Director/Newsletter Editor	Betsy Gaudette-Cross (559) 786-5340

**MORE APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ARE IN YOUR DIRECTORY!**

## Welcome to New Members!

We would like to welcome and introduce new members this month:

Welcome to Allison Byerly. Allison went to school at the Virginia Seminary and received her Doctor of Ministry in 2014. She is currently a Methodist minister who lives in Tulare. Her interests include baseball, books, wine tasting and current events. With those varied interests there are many ways for her to be involved in AAUW. Please make her welcome and invite her to join you on your AAUW adventures.

Welcome to Charlene Blunt. Charlene has been a member in the past, and has chosen to rejoin and enjoy the activities of AAUW. She went to Fresno State and majored in Social Sciences. She spent many years as an educator. She taught at Liberty School, Green Acres Middle School, La Joya Middle School, and most recently at VCIS. Her interests include photography, history, current events, art, and giving back to the community. She is a dynamic, adventurous traveler who enjoys life. Please re-welcome her back to AAUW.

We would also like to re-welcome Leslie Minium back to AAUW. She is the sister of Susan Cunningham. Leslie went to CSU Long Beach and earned a Masters Degree in Education. We look forward to having her join in on the many activities of AAUW as she (and we) get back into the swing of our activities and projects.

Please welcome our newest member, Mary Weisenbeger. She attended Contra Costa College and Armstrong College. She has an AA in Journalism. Her interests are reading, walking, movies, and bocce ball. She is interested in book groups and getting to know other Visalia women. Her phone number is 925-297-7087 and her email is mweisen05@att.net. Our 2021-2022 Membership is currently at 129 members. Included are eleven 50-year members and three renewed members, Leslie Minium, Patricia Singh and Charlene Blunt.

**Please make an effort to welcome them at our next in-person meeting!**

**The Program Vice Presidents** are already thinking about programs for the 21-22 year. We always get wonderful suggestions from our AAUW members. **Please send any ideas you might have to us.**

**Sherri Bentley**

625-2448 288-5429 (cell)  
[sherribentley49@gmail.com](mailto:sherribentley49@gmail.com)

**Susan Mathews**

739-1449 731-8074 (cell)  
[smathews18@gmail.com](mailto:smathews18@gmail.com)

**Phyllis Matteson**

732-1988 300-5022 (cell)  
[rapmat@aol.com](mailto:rapmat@aol.com)

**- The Ice House Theatre Presents -**

**November 14,2021** (Sunday) arrive by 1:30p.m. for 2:00 curtain

**Location:**The Ice House Theatre, 410 E.Race Ave.

**Program:** "Hot Flashes"

**Presenters:** Susan Mathews and Karen Simpson both from AAUW, plus cast and band.

This original musical follows the lives of 5 women from 40 to 70 and begins in the 60's. The lyrics are hysterical! The show features songs such as I Will Not Age, In The Nude and Never Too Old to Rock. If you want to have a great afternoon and never stop laughing ....don't miss this hit musical!

