



# Sequoia News

## Notes from the Presidents:

### Susan Cunningham & Maile Melkonian

*“Lovers must not, like usurers, live for themselves alone. They must finally turn from their gaze at one another back toward the community. . . They say their vows to the community as much as to one another.”*

—Wendell Berry, writer and activist

As we head into Valentine’s Day, it’s nice to be able to show a little love toward our community. By being a member of this organization, you are doing just that.

Our Branch has a lot going on. Many of our members find a way to help nurture and care for our community by: serving on Nan-Celia Horobetz’s **Scholarship** Committee; Jeanne Evans’s **Tech Trek** Committee; Lori Olvera-Clarkson’s management of **Expanding Your Horizons**; and weekly **Book Sorting** organized by Sandy Parmelly, making all these efforts possible. **Great Decisions**, co-chaired by Pat Foster and Maile Melkonian, gets started again this month, offering the public a forum for education in foreign affairs.

An organization can’t stay healthy without some self-care, as well. Susan Franciskovich and Donna Nottingham are keeping our **Budget** Committee on track. A review of **Policies and Procedures** is shepherded by Nancy Adalian. Acknowledging efforts above and beyond is the goal of Nancy Holmes’s **Honored Member Fund** Committee.

And, very importantly, the **Nominating** Committee, headed by Jan Johnson, has initiated its crucial two-month task: securing enough volunteers to make it all happen again next year. Please make their job easy by saying “I do” when they call!

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## February AAUW Program

### February’s General Meeting

**DATE:** February 17,2022 (Thursday)  
**TIME:** 4:00-5:00  
**LOCATION:** Congregation B’Nai David  
1039 S. Chinowth St.  
**PROGRAM:** “Ways To Improve Your Balance And Strength, And Why It’s Important”

**PRESENTER:** Dr. Jennifer Elliott, Physical Therapist, Kaweah Health Clinic

Have you been noticing an ever- increasing lack of sure balance as you walk and get up lately??? You are not alone! Come give yourself a personal well-being valentine by following along with Dr. Elliott as she guides us through a routine of gentle exercises to strengthen our bodies, while working on increasing our balance so we can walk and move with ease. You don’t have to be a super athlete or yoga enthusiast to benefit from Dr. Elliott’s guidance. As this space is limited, this meeting is limited to just 20 masked (and hopefully vaccinated) members. Bring your exercise mat if you have one, and dress in comfortable workout clothes and shoes!

**Cost: none**

Contact for reservations: Sherri Bentley at [sherribentley49@gmail.com](mailto:sherribentley49@gmail.com) or 559288-5429.

Dr. Elliott has been a physical therapist at Visalia Health Clinic (now named Kaweah Health Group) since 2008. A native of Visalia, she received her undergraduate degree from Fresno Pacific University , graduating magna cum laude in pre-physical therapy. She earned her doctorate in physical therapy from Loma Linda University.



The message of stewardship toward the amazing nature around us was reinforced by Lisa Monteiro's stories of Mineral King last month. Kudos to Susan Mathews and our **Program Committee** for nimbly pivoting from their in-person plans to a Zoom format when CoVID rates spiked. With 38 in attendance, it worked pretty well.

We'll be monitoring virus rates closely, as we near our February 17 Branch meeting. The focus on "Ways to Improve Your Balance and Strength" is a valentine to each of us! To accommodate everyone's comfort zones, we may even experiment with a hybrid meeting—so you can choose to join in person or via Zoom. Sherri Bentley will let you know details a few days in advance.

Meanwhile, Happy Valentines to you all. — Susan Cunningham & Maile Melkonian, Co-presidents

## Special Interest Group

**Great Decisions** Discussions begin February 1, 7:00-9:00 via Zoom for at least the Feb 1 and Feb 15 dates. The link to these sessions is in the email previously sent to those participating. February 1 discussion is Changing Demographics! Questions? Call me, Pat Foster, (559) 901-8685 patricianfoster@gmail.com

## Coffee & California Concerns Update

With CoVID complicating matters this year, it looks like C&CC is taking the entire year on hiatus. We do hope to have a chair (or co-chairs?) for the 2022-23 year, to coordinate this wonderfully informative section. We all miss it! This is a participant-driven section, so the coordinator is not responsible for topics or speakers but, rather, handles communications for the group. If you are interested, please contact Maile Melkonian to find out what is involved.

**The Walkers** are still walking Tuesday and Thursday 8-9AM at Lifestyles. Once the weather gets warmer, we will be walking outside. There are only 2 of us and we would like more! Questions? Call Marsha, (559) 741-1165

## Tech Trek

This summer the virtual statewide camps will be back! The AAUW state board of directors, after a great deal of thoughtful discussion, made the decision that our Tech Trek program will always include a state-wide virtual camp option with a standardized curriculum. In other words, the board endorsed having a single type of virtual camp instead of versions at each site. The board felt the advantages of a standardized virtual camp are consistency of the camp experience, more efficient use of resources, more manageable volunteer requirements, a unified presence for donors, and avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort. Also, our beloved in person camp may still be happening. Fresno State has said an on-site camp can be held though understandably they have not committed to any dates yet.

All five of our Visalia Unified middle schools' 7th grade math and science teachers as well as the principals have just been notified of these developments. Once the specifics for this year's nomination process have been decided upon and shared with me, I will send that information on to the teachers. So, the process has just begun!

Jeanne Evans

**The Bookworms** are still meeting monthly.

January's book selection was *Cloud Cuckoo Land* by Anthony Doerr. February's book selection will be Aesop's Fables. We have 7 women but we would like more!

## Spring Book Sale

It's almost Book Sale time! The mall is looking forward to having us again and dates have been tentatively set for the week of March 28 through April 4, pending Covid mandates or restrictions. Actual sale days are Tuesday, March 29 thru Sunday, April 3. March 28 is a set up day and April 4 is our takedown day. We need workers for all days. A work schedule will be posted online for signups closer to our sale dates. Sandy Parmelly, our warehouse manager, tells me we don't have a "ton" of books for this sale so if you know anyone who wants to contribute books, we'll take them. More info to come.

Jan Johnson

## 2022-2023 AAUW Officers

Your nominating committee is working on a slate of officers for next year. If you'd like to get more involved in our chapter, I'm sure there's a spot for you. Check out our AAUW yearbook for officers and section heads. If you see something you'd be interested in, give me a call. As the saying goes - we need YOU!

Jan Johnson

### Mark Your Calendar

#### February 17, 2022 (Thursday)

4:00–5:30pm

LOCATION: Congregation B'nai David, 1039 S. Chinowth St.

PROGRAM: ***"Ways to Improve Your Balance and Strength"***

PRESENTER: Dr. Jennifer Elliott, Physical Therapist, Kaweah Health Clinic

Come give yourself a personal valentine by following along with Dr. Elliott as she guides us through a routine of gentle exercises to strengthen our bodies, work on better balance, and boost walking with ease. Dress in comfortable workout clothes and shoes!

#### March 17, 2022 (Thursday)

4:00–5:30pm

LOCATION: Visalia Convention Center, Sequoia Room, 303 E. Acequia

PROGRAM: ***"Equity in our Schools"***

PRESENTER: Brandon Gridiron, V.U.S.D. Administrator for Equity and Student Services

The national conversation around equity—whether racial, physical, gender or economic—resonates locally, as well. Visalia Unified School District created an administrative position to focus on this, and work to improve opportunities for all students to learn effectively.

## A COUPLE OF FUN FACTS

In 1880, 1.9% of all young women in the U.S. were college women.

By 1980, the percentage was 37.9.

In 1880 the percentage of college students who were female was 33.4.

By 1980 it increased to 51.8%. [In 2021 the number is 59.5%. Progress indeed.]

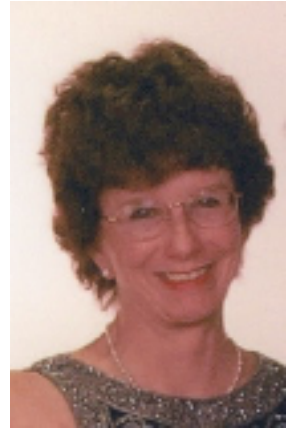
## We lost a member of our AAUW family...

The family of Ann Mehrten-McKellar has notified us that dear Ann passed on Sunday, January 23, after a very brief period of hospice. As many of you know, she broke her back and neck in a terrible car accident a decade ago.

Between her family's attentive efforts and her own gumption, she was able to extend her life this long. She has been a long-time member of AAUW, and

has numerous friends in our membership. In fact, she is a second-generation member. Her mother, Nita Shidler, was our Branch's third president in 1928. Ann was a formidable bridge player, scrabble enthusiast and tennis player, the camaraderie of which she enjoyed tremendously. She traveled the world, worked in Japan for a time, and lived in Mexico City where her three daughters, Cristina, Diana and Denise, were born. Returning to Visalia as a struggling single mother, she supported her children as an educator. Decades later, she married schoolmate Bob, enhancing both their lives. Ann celebrated her 90th birthday just last month. She was a delight, and is already missed.

Ann's family will be having a graveside service (so it will be outdoors) at the Visalia Cemetery, on Saturday., February 12, at 10:30am. Arrangements are being handled by Miller Funeral Home. The family is planning a light lunch to follow the service, and will announce that at the service. They welcome Ann's friends.



This month's  
**Board meeting is**  
**Wednesday**  
**February 16**  
**2:00pm**

by Zoom:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5255182341?  
pwd=UEVQRXZ0d3RJTnoxOU15QWWhPNVNuQ  
T09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5255182341?pwd=UEVQRXZ0d3RJTnoxOU15QWWhPNVNuQT09)

# January's Meeting

Even though our January meeting was confined to Zoom, we had a great turnout that enjoyed Lisa Monteiro's presentation on Mineral King. She included beautiful slides and gave both a historical and environmental perspective. Our board also met by Zoom right after the meeting. It is looking like our February meeting may be a hybrid of Zoom with limited in-person attendance. I hope we can make this work! Thanks to the flexibility of our members!

