



# Sequoia News

## April AAUW Program

### AAUW APRIL MEETING

**PRESENTER:** Lorene Clark-President of  
**Sequoia Genealogical Society**

**PROGRAM:** Learning How to Trace Your  
**Genealogy**

**PLACE:** Lamp Liter Inn

**DATE:** Thursday, April 21st, 2022

**TIME:** 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

**MENU:** Choice of Salads

\*Chinese Chicken Salad

\*Chef Salad

\*Chicken Tostada Salad

**COST:** \$20

**Please indicate your choice of salad when  
you make your reservation.**

Have you ever been curious about your ancestry? Don't know how or where to get started? The Tulare Public Library is lucky to have one of the largest collections of genealogical materials in Central California. It is housed in the library's "Hillman Family Library of Local History & Genealogy", otherwise known as the Genealogy Room.

Lorene Clark is not only president of our local Genealogical Society, she is also one of volunteer workers at the Tulare Public Library Genealogy Room. Lorene will tell you how to get started and what resources are available. How exciting!

**Please send your reservations by April 18th to:**

**Phyllis Matteson**

**3320 S Hall St, Visalia 93277**

**Phone: 732-1988**

**Text: 300-5022**

**Email: [rapmat@aol.com](mailto:rapmat@aol.com)**

## Notes from the Presidents:

### Susan Cunningham & Maile Melkonian

"The more you know about yourself, and the experiences and struggles of your family coming to America, the more you can respect yourself and others, and appreciate the opportunity we have here. ... One of the greatest assets we have in America is our diversity —immigrants."

—Brandon Gridiron

Spring is a season of *regeneration*. It is associated, perhaps, with when we appreciate our gardens and our foothills most. But there is much more renewal going on, in so many realms.

Our April speaker on "Genealogy 101" will help us understand the basics of researching our family trees. (See details at right.) Paraphrasing Mr. Gridiron's point last month, knowing our roots can help us direct our focus as we branch out into the future.

Unique to Spring 2022 is our incremental return to some sense of post-pandemic normalcy. In an attempt to accommodate members' varying comfort zones, we are returning to in-person meetings, while making recordings of the programs available to those who request them.

Our Book Sales, too, are coming out of Covid-induced dormancy, and regenerating our mission-enabling revenue stream. Susan Cunningham has more about the spring book sale on page 3.

Branch elections offer an annual refreshing of our board with a new slate of officers listed below. A very special shout-out to those who are ready, willing, and able to serve. We can't do our work—we can't *exist*—without you! Formal election of officers will occur at the April meeting. We hope you will participate in the quorum.

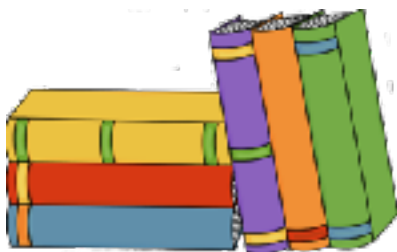
Unfortunately—tragically, even—renewal on one hand is sometimes the result of destruction on the other.

continued on page 2

We are all watching the daily horror of events in Ukraine. This crisis has galvanized Ukrainian resolve, as well as strengthened European unity as never before. If you are looking for a way to express your empathy, contact Susan Franciskovich's daughter Katie (a Peace Corps alum) who is making sure donations are getting directly to educators defending their city where she once worked. Look for Katie Ozturk on FaceBook, or e-mail to kathrynenid@gmail.com.

Meanwhile, here's wishing you all a much more gentle season of renewal.

*Susan Cunningham & Maile Melkonian*  
\*Co-Presidents



## AAUW Spring Book Sale

Hi Ladies - By the time you receive the newsletter, our Book Sale will be in full

swing. We can always use more help so even if you've already signed up for or worked a shift, come help again. It's always fun and the conversations flow. While we don't have as many books as we usually have, I'm sure our sale will be a great success. It's an important mission we undertake every year - bringing books to the community and scholarships for higher education. See you at the Mall!

Jan Johnson

## A big thank you...

Thank you AAUW members for stepping up and helping to distribute signs to advertise the book sale. We have put over 60 signs out to let the people of Visalia and Tulare County know the dates. Remember that the signs need to be picked up within two days after the sale ends. You can return them to my porch, just put your name on them so I know who to credit with the return. **Please have them returned by April 8th so we can account for them all.**

Again...thanks!

Suzanne Babcock  
freshstart93277@gmail.com

## Brandon Gridiron

V.U.S.D. Administrator for  
Equity & Student Services

"Equity in Our Schools"

March 17, 2022, A.A.U.W.

By Maile Melkonian



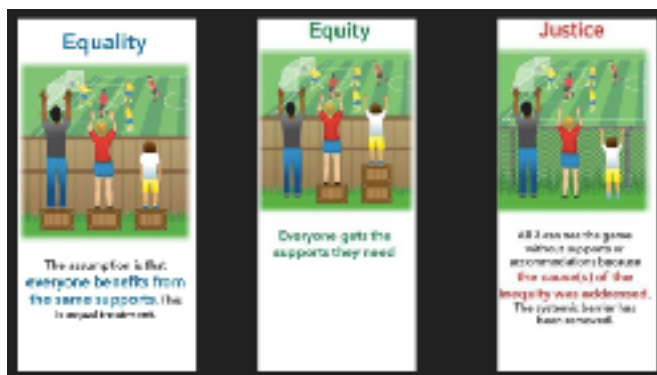
Brandon Gridiron's presentation for our March 17 program was on "Equity in Our Schools," but the points he made apply much more broadly.

Explaining how 'equality' and 'equity' are not the same thing [see graphic], he clarified how removing barriers to **equality** and providing boosts toward **equity** are both in the service of the goal of providing **justice** in the learning environment for all kids.

Taking his masters in counseling student services and administrative credential to the next level, Mr. Gridiron is currently working on a PhD in education leadership. The principles he is working with as he researches his dissertation help inform his professional goals at the 42 VUSD sites within his mandate—including objectives as varied as culturally responsive teaching, access to health services, trauma awareness, and much more.

Gridiron talked about some of the projects developed since this position was created just a few years ago. To encourage civic engagement, a Student Task Force was created. Several of their ideas have been implemented, including having a student School Board member at every Board meeting.

The bottom-line aim, he said, is "to transform our institutions by eliminating inequitable practices ... so that success and failure are no longer predictable by identity—racial, cultural, economic—or any other social factor."



## Visalia-Sequoia AAUW Branch Book Sale

On books: *“What a miracle it is that out of these small, flat, rigid squares of paper unfolds world after world, worlds that sing to you, comfort and quiet or excite you. Books show us what community and friendship mean; they show us how to live and die.”* – Anne Lamott



**Below: Wand would we do without the book-sorters?**

A big thank you for all your work every Monday morning. What to help? Call Sandy Parmelly (559) 732-2450



By the time you receive this newsletter, we'll be smack dab into book sale mania. Don't you just love seeing a book lover find a favorite volume or a child express joy at just the right storybook? Our Visalia-Sequoia AAUW Branch does a great job of putting affordable books into the hands of the community. It is a monumental project with monumental rewards!

### Thank You to:

- Our coordinators, Jan Johnson and Sandy Parmelly
- The many Branch members who work shifts (48 so far have signed up at the time of writing)
- The Sequoia Mall for being our venue
- The sorters who spend their Mondays organizing donations and/or doing daily pickups at Lifestyles
- Allison Babcock for our communications and work schedule with reminders
- Suzanne Babcock for famous yard signs
- The countless local people who donate books
- Mark Thompson for helping us maintain the quality of the books we offer and who finds homes for our leftovers through Books for Prisons
- The Bixlers for taking a trailer-load of books to the mall for us every sale
- Brent Davis and the C.O.S. athletic teams for loading the truck
- Jacob Avila and the Redwood F.B.L.A. for moving thousands of books to set up our sale tables
- And the scores of patrons who support our sale.

All these contributions make our C.O.S. scholarships, Tech Trek, and Expanding Your Horizons possible!

Susan Cunningham



## Special Interest Group

### Tech Trek

Six girls have completed and submitted the required documents for Tech Trek. These girls represent Ridgeview and Green Acres Middle schools. One of the girls has opted into taking part in a virtual camp. One has indicated that she has no preference which means she is fine with doing either a virtual camp or the Fresno State residential camp. That leaves four girls who want to attend the in-person camp in Fresno. Visalia-Sequoia has an allotment for the Fresno State camp for three girls. The Tech Trek committee has met to discuss our process for who will attend the Fresno camp and who will be an alternate. This will be based on the nominating teachers' recommendations as well as each girl's application and essay. The state camp director has indicated that there is a high degree of possibility that an alternate will be able to attend the Fresno State camp but there is no guarantee. We are hopeful that will happen!

Thanks for all you do!  
Jeanne

### Scholarship Committee:

Scholarships are what we are all about. Tuesday, March 15, the Scholarship Committee interviewed the 7 recipients of scholarships. Catherine Camargo, Matthew Figueroa, Kellsy Medeiro, and Samuel Mulick will receive a scholarship from AAUW. Donia Alamsi, Lorenzo Calvanese-Carter, and Jessica Parker will receive a scholarship from Mary Lou Flattley Memorial. It is a great pleasure to speak directly with the students, and learn directly the value of our book sales.

Nan-Celia Horobetz  
[panama47@protonmail.com](mailto:panama47@protonmail.com)

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

**Great Decisions** - discussions continue in April with more timely topics:

April 5 - Xi's China takes on the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between Australia, India, Japan and the U.S.)

April 19 - No end in sight: a century of drug wars  
These discussions continue to be on Zoom at this time. If changes are made to the venue, those members who are signed up will be informed. A reminder email will be sent before each discussion!

This past month, **Great Decisions** tackled two of the world's most pressing issues: Putin's Russia and climate change. The sequence of the two topics was reversed to allow a discussion of Russia on March 1, only five days after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as it was on the minds of all participants. The somber conversation [pictured below] looked at the subject from multiple angles, and helped all to digest its complexities.

—Maile



### Section/Interest Groups

Do you know all the groups that AAUW has?

- Book Sorters
- Book Worms
- Bridge
- Great Decisions
- Knit Wits
- Refresher bridge
- Traveling Troopers
- Unabridged Book Group
- Volunteer Visalia
- Weekly Walkers

Check out all the groups time and descriptions on page 5 of our directory.

## It's Election Time!

Below you will see the slate of Visalia-Sequoia AAUW candidates for elected offices for the 2022-2023 year. Here is a huge **THANK YOU** to the volunteers who help our branch succeed at our mission to support educational equity for all. Please look over the list and be prepared to vote at the general meeting on Genealogy, Thursday, April 21st. It's not too late to volunteer for the second Co-president Elect position, just contact Maile Melkonian, [maile.melkonian@icloud.com](mailto:maile.melkonian@icloud.com) or (559) 802-3315. Also there are ways to help with other committees, such as Tech Trek or Expanding Your Horizons. Note: After extensive searching, the executive board approved a stipend to compensate for the expertise needed to continue our professional style newsletter. This will be revisited at the end of the 22-23 year.

Visalia-Sequoia AAUW slate of candidates for 2022-2023 year	
Co-presidents	Maile Melkonian
	Lisa Silva
Co-president Elects	Linda Tucker
	TBD
Program Vice President	Sherri Bentley
Membership Vice President	Suzanne Babcock
Membership Treasurer	Jean Moritz
Treasurer	Donna Nottingham
Financial Director	Susan Franciscovich
Honored Member Fund VP	Nancy Holmes
Secretary	Marsha Brooks-Smith
Communication Director/ Newsletter Editor	Allison Babcock

**Be Sure And Attend Our  
Next General Meeting,  
Enjoy Friendship, And Learn  
About Genealogy.**

**PRESENTER:** Lorene Clark-President of  
Sequoia Genealogical Society  
**PROGRAM:** Learning How to Trace Your Genealogy  
**PLACE:** Lamp Litter Inn  
**DATE & TIME:** April 21st - 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM  
**MENU:** Choice of Salads  
\*Chinese Chicken Salad  
\*Chef Salad  
\*Chicken Tostada Salad

**COST:** \$20

**Please indicate your choice of salad when you make your reservation.**

## Mark Your Calendar - TWO MORE MEETINGS LEFT

### **April 21, 2022** (Thursday)

11:30am–1:30pm

LOCATION: Lamp Liter Inn, 3300 W. Mineral King Ave.

PROGRAM: **“Genealogy 101”**

PRESENTER: Lorene Clark, President, Sequoia Genealogical Society

Are you curious about your ancestry, and thinking you might want to do a bit of genealogy, but don't know how to start? Learn the basics: how to research, record and document your family's lineage, to provide a heritage resource for the next generation. Lunch: \$20.

### **May 14, 2022** (Saturday)

2:00–4:00pm

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

EVENT: **Scholarship Reception**

After the COVID-19 hiatus, we look forward to, once again, meeting our scholarship recipients face-to-face. Hear the heartwarming stories of how these worthy COS students have met incredible challenges in pursuit of their higher-education goals. We also get to meet three Tech Trekkers who have excelled despite the pandemic.

