

The Sequoia Newsletter

Visalia - Sequoia AAUW

CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER

"If you love community, you will serve your community."

— Stephen Colbert

What a wonderful way to bring in the Branch new year with a great turnout for our **January Branch meeting!** The camaraderie was really nice. Visalia Unified's new superintendent Kirk Shrum laid out his ambitious vision for the School District—including better statistical analysis, more high school math requirements, and One Visalia Connect, an initiative to connect students to the greater community in a variety of ways. Of course, we wish the District every success!

Our **February 16 meeting** is just two days after Valentines, so in the spirit of amity we'd

like everyone to invite a friend! Program Vice President Sherri Bentley has put together a super program on "Improving Literacy in Tulare County"—featuring the experience and good work of Read for Life and Read for Success—which should interest a lot of folks. Reserve by February 9.

It's that time of the year now, when our **Nominating Committee** is formed and performs its essential task. Chair Cathy Lovell will be looking for volunteers. Please make her job easy.

Other things are happening, too. In fact, spring is an exciting time for us. AAUW California's brand-new program **Gov Trek**, a five-session governance webinar for high school girls, has already

begun. Public Policy Chair Terry Cornelius's outreach yielded 5 participants from our area. **Lobby Day** is coming up in March—with four of our members getting involved. Both Lisa Silva and Linda Tucker will be attending the (on-line) **State Annual Meeting** in April. And **Tech Trek** Chair Jeanne Evans completed an organizational milestone for the 11 junior high girls we are sponsoring for this summer's STEM camps.

Also in the spirit of the season, Communications Director Ally Babcock has rolled out our new **Facebook** account—so be sure to "like" it!

— Maile Melkonian & Lisa Silva



IN MEMORIAM

Our Branch has made donations to the AAUW Education Foundation in honor of these recently lost members:

Eleanor Hawkins
Jane Hornung

BOARD MEETING

Monday, Feb. 13

2:30 p.m.

At B'nai David Congregation

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

February General AAUW Meeting

Date: Thursday, February 16, 2023

Time: 11:30 – 1:30

Location: 210 Café, 210 W. Center Ave.

Program: "Improving Literacy in Tulare County"

Presenters: **Margarita Lozano**, Literacy Center, Tulare County Library, Visalia.

Sue Sanders, Read For Life president, Visalia

Menu: sandwiches, chips, salad, cookie

Cost: \$20 At the event

Reservations made to: Sherri Bentley, 288 5429, home, 625-2448 by **February 9**.

Our co-presidents' theme this year is investigating ways we can improve literacy in our county. Two successful, ongoing local programs covering two age groups, pre-school and young children, as well as adult literacy will be our focus at this meeting. Both programs are volunteer based. **Read For Life** distributes gently used and new books to clinics, Head Start, and needy homes, as well as presenting informational sessions for parents. **Read to**

Succeed at the library focuses on helping adults trying to navigate life's challenges. Read for Life could use gently used children's books that can be used with young children, if you care to bring some donations.

We appreciate your patience as we dealt with our new venue at the January meeting at 210. We have asked for admittance to start at 11:15 with speakers starting at 11:30, general meeting after that while we eat. Condiments are available at the back side-bar, as is our water for drinks.

I will try to make requests for roast beef or turkey, or special vegetarian choices when I phone our total in on Friday the 10th, but beg your forgiveness if that doesn't work easily—you can consider switching lunch boxes with someone near you (like in

grade school). Thank you for all who attended last month—we had a good showing with 36 people. Sorry for the new reservation day—it is their request for purchasing food and ordering.

DEADLINE FOR MAKING RESERVATIONS IS THURSDAY, FEB.9 FOR THE FRIDAY CALL IN DEADLINE.

IF YOU MAKE A RESERVATION AFTER THAT DAY, YOU WILL HAVE TO ORDER FROM THEIR FRONT COUNTER

Sherri Bentley, Program VP

KNIT WITS

— Cathy Lovell

Below are some pictures from our interest group Knit Wits and what they are up to lately. The right picture is the granddaughter of one of Dona Meinhart's former students from the Literacy Center. Carol Sonier gave the toddler a knitted cap that she designed and knit. Carol donates caps to local hospitals on a regular basis. The left picture is of our Knit Wits' Christmas brunch hosted by Janice Crenshaw. Clockwise from the left is Nancy Adalian, Carol Seastrom, Cathy Lovell, Carol Sonier, Rovena Forest, Jean Moritz, and Janice Crenshaw. If you are interested in any type of needlework, please join us as we meet every Tuesday from 10-noon at the 210 Cafe. Call Cathy Lovell if you have questions.



MEMBERSHIP

- Suzanne Babcock, Membership VP

We re-welcome Betsy Gaudette-Cross into the Visalia-Sequoia branch. Glad Betsy now has dual membership in AAUW. We welcome her membership in our branch!



COFFEE AND CALIFORNIA CONCERNS

- Jill Rojas, Co-Chair

The new year started off with a visit by eight members to the Visalia Unified Learning Center. We learned about all that the Sequoias Adult Education has to offer adults in our region. Additionally, members were made aware of the library services available for families in Visalia Unified.

NEXT MEETING

When: Wednesday, February 1 @ 10:00 am

Where: 210 Café

Topic: What Is Critical Race Theory?

We will be reading three different articles and will discuss as a group to bring a better understanding to a complex topic.

Questions contact Jill Rojas @ 362-8531



GREAT DECISIONS

- Maile Melkonian, Co-Chair

There is no shortage of international issues for us to discuss this year! And we are back in person after 2½ years on-line. That means we meet at C.O.S., Hospital Rock, Room 133, from 7:00 to 9:00pm. Here are the dates and topics for this month:

February 14 — War Crimes

February 28 — China and the U.S.

Parking fees are waived for participants for the north lot, Lot #4, which is closest to the venue.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

- Susan Franciskovich

Budget committee members gather to review the budget at mid-year. Our outcomes were positive.....there were no recommendations for revisions to the budget.

At right, Program V.P. Sherri Bentley, Co-President Elect Linda Tucker, Co-President Lisa Silva, Treasurer Donna Nottingham and Co-President Maile Melkonian discuss budget matters at the home of Finance Director Susan Franciskovich's home on January 12



TECH TREK

- Jeanne Evans, Chair

Here is information about the two camps that the nominated girls will be able to choose from. Teacher nominations will be due in early February.

- During the residential camp at Fresno State, which will be in June, the girls will live in a college dorm, attend a daily STEM class, perform hands-on activities, participate in one or more field trips, and interact with women STEM role models. **The girls will get a glimpse of what college dorm life is like.**
- Girls who attend the virtual camp participate on-line in similar classes and hands-on activities (materials are provided for them) and are exposed to a host of STEM role models in the online environment, both near-peer and adult females, all from the comfort of their own home.



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Empowering Women in California

AAUW has been empowering women as individuals and as a community since 1881. For more than 130 years, we have worked together as a national grassroots organization to improve the lives of millions of women and their families

AAUW California Mission:

AAUW California facilitates California branches in meeting the vision and mission of AAUW by providing programs, education, and resources.

AAUW Mission:

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

