

Sacramento Branch of AAUW Presents

“The Rights Stuff” Episode Nine

It's a Wrap! Celebrate an Award-Worthy Year

Lights, Camera, Action!!

Saturday May 18, 2024 - 10a.m-12:30p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Society, 2425 Sierra Blvd., Sacramento



May is the time to salute ourselves and celebrate the conclusion of another fantastic year of AAUW activity and support of women young and the young-in-spirit. Join us as we honor our 50-year members, hear from our young Speech Trek winner and outstanding scholarship winners, and salute Named Gift honorees.

You will greet the stars of this year's programs, welcome several new members and have time to socialize while enjoying some delicious morning treats and beverages. Barbara and Hedda now know how to transport without spilling, so count on coffee, too! (That is an inside joke that people who attended the March meeting will understand.)

Be prepared to voice your suggestions and commitment to help with next year's programs. Tell us what has inspired you to action this year and what committee you are willing to join. Were there branch activities that you would like to see repeated next year? (Many have asked to return to the Sojourner Truth Museum and Saturday Market.) Are there new interest groups or book groups you would be willing to form? Perhaps a Banned Book reading group?

The Tech Trek and Speech Trek projects are a big success and let many people learn about AAUW, and Gov Trek promises to be a much needed and appreciated project, but we can't go ahead with it unless we have a leader/coordinator.

We have tried to provide the Lights and the Camera Focus on issues this year. Now it is your turn to help provide the Action.

Start by registering for the May branch meeting. Contact Margaret Steinberg and let her know you are coming. There is no charge to attend, but please make a reservation so that we know how many to plan for. **Guests are welcome!**

President's Message By Nancy McCabe



My message this month recaps the April Branch meeting for all of you who missed Episode 8 of this year's programs. Our Program Vice-Presidents, Hedda Smithson and Barbara Smith, coordinated with the Citrus Heights-American River AAUW Branch to deliver an outstanding event focused on the Right to Read Anything You Want to Read. In keeping with our theme of **Lights, Camera, Action**, the program focused **Light** on the issue of book challenging and banning. We learned that many books are challenged, not as many are actually banned.

Our speakers were **Justin Azevedo**, the children and youth's materials selector for the Sacramento Library System and **Brenna Bellavance**, chief book seller and selector at **Underground Books in Oak Park**. Accompanying them was **Christy Aguirree**, Head of Acquisitions for the entire Sacramento Library system.

Justin explained that a challenged book is one that has received a request for removal from the library or that it be moved from the children's section to the adult section. If the challenge is granted, the book is removed from the system. It is "banned." The number of requests has increased dramatically in recent years. He also explained that as a public employee, he has a different approach to a book than he does as a father of young children. As a public employee, he may not allow his personal opinion to interfere with other people's right to decide what their children may read. As a parent he can!

Brenna explained the unique role that Underground Books plays in the Oak Park community. The bookstore operates under the umbrella of St. Hope, a non-profit committed to revitalizing Oak Park through high quality education and economic development. As such, Underground Books serves as a bookstore, a replacement for the long-closed Oak Park public library, and a community gathering center. It stocks materials that are reflective of and relevant to the people of the area. To encourage reading, free books are distributed at monthly children's events funded primarily through donations. The goal of allowing children to see themselves depicted in books and their community, a Black Santa visits and distributes books to the multitude of children who come to have their annual "picture with Santa" taken.

Christy answered questions about library funding, staffing, dealing with the public, and the effort to deal with requests for banning books.

In short, we all learned how very fortunate we are to have such a dynamic, committed library staff and system in Sacramento. They provide untold service to the community every day.

Your **Action** response to this meeting should be to speak up in public whenever and where ever you encounter efforts to ban books, especially at local school board meetings where most such

efforts begin. Do not allow the loudest, often lone, voice to intimidate. Also, choose to read books that focus on groups and lives dissimilar to your own. Do this in your book group or family. Start or join a banned book club (there are specialty Tee shirts just for that!). **Click <[here](#)>** to see the list of the 100 most banned and challenged books from 2010-2019. You have probably read a lot of them!

I hope to see you on May 18 for Episode 9!

Interest Group Happenings By Vicki Nicholson

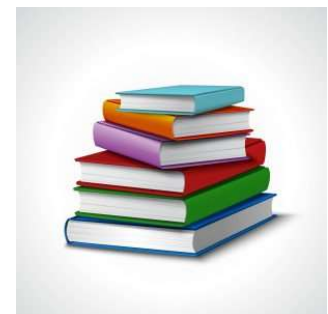
- **Art & Architecture: Wednesday, May 8, 10:30 a.m.;** tour of Sacramento City College focusing on Art Deco buildings, paintings, and decorative arts; contact Deborah Dunn.
- **Great Decisions I: Monday, May 20, 7 p.m. on Zoom;** topic--Pandemic Preparedness; contact Cathy Locke.
- **Great Decisions II: Thursday, May 9, 7 p.m. on Zoom;** topic--U.S.-China Trade Rivalry; contact Lynn Wood.
- **Great Decisions III: Monday, May 20, 1 p.m.;** topic--U.S.-China Trade Rivalry; 3931 Village Court, Fair Oaks, 95628; contact Margaret McCarty.
- **Healthy Heart: Friday, May 17, 11:30 a.m.;** Matteo's Pizza & Bistro, 1532 Arden Way; contact Jane Cooley.
- **Reader's Theater: Tuesday, May 14, 1 p.m.;** *Play On!* by Rick Abbot; Mary Williams' home; contact Diane Petersen.
- **Scrabble for Fun: Monday, May 27, 1 p.m.;** Eskaton Village (on Walnut) game room; contact Vivian Counts.
- **Singles Dining: Sunday, May 5, 6 p.m.;** Dumpling Yo!, 1032 Florin Road (In the Nugget shopping Center off of I-5), Sacramento; Contact Marty McKnew.



Book Groups Update By Sharon Anderson

Reminder there is a “books” page under “Activities” on our branch website (<https://sacramento-ca.aauw.net/bookgroups/>). If you wish to see what others are reading, or get ideas for your book group or yourself, please find the books page and take a look.

Each book group has its own tab, by book group number. (These book group numbers correlate with page 6 of the branch Membership Directory.) On each list, the meeting days, times and coordinator are listed. Feel free to call me if you have trouble locating it.



May Book Groups

Book Group 1:

Master Slave Husband Wife, by Illyon Woo, on May 9; coordinator is Joy Clous

Book Group 2:

Brave Companions, by Ash Davidson, on May 7; coordinator is Carol Hayes

Book Group 3:

Lila, by Marilynne Robinson, on May 22; coordinator is Carolyn Meeker

Book Group 4:

Astor, the Rise and Fall of an American Fortune, by Anderson Cooper, on May 8; coordinator is Pat Morehead

Book Group 6:

We Could Have Been Friends, My Father and I, by Raja Shehadeh, on May 20; coordinator is Susana Mullen

Book Group 8:

The Personal Librarian, by Marie Benedict, Victoria Murray, on May 27; coordinator is Diana Squire

Book Group 10:

Dinners with Ruth: a Memoir of the Power of Friendship, by Nina Totenberg, on May 16; coordinator is Sandi Schoenman

Book Group 12:

Killers of the Flower Moon, by David Grann, on May 2; coordinator is Linda Cook

Looking for Readers!

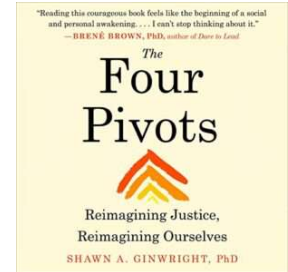
The **Tahoe Park Book Group** (Group 1) is looking for new members, whether they live in the Tahoe Park area or anywhere, meeting the 2nd Thursday at 1:30. Contact coordinator Joy Clous for more information.

Living Our Mission of Equity By Charmen Goehring

We hope you will join us in a monthly equity conversation where we look at our own biases, seek actions we can take to attract diversity to our branch and become better people in the process. Each month, we read a section of our selected book then meet to discuss what we have

learned, along with exploring other issues related to race and equity. We meet the first Wednesday of each month from 7 to 8 p.m. on Zoom.

The Zoom meeting code is 737 420 3780 or you can join using this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7374203780> We will discuss our current book, **The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves**, by Shawn Ginwright, PhD., **on May 1st at 7 p.m.** We will discuss Pivot 2 (pages 91-150). If you have questions and to RSVP, please email Charmin at charminme@yahoo.com.



Membership Happenings By Gloria Yost and Vicky Lovell

Strengthening our AAUW Sacramento connections and friendships

Let's Talk About Membership!

The AAUW calendar year runs from July 1 – June 30, and most of us renew our memberships in May and June in one of two ways

- We complete our forms directly through National online, **or**
- We complete a paper form which we send to our Membership Treasurer, Donna Holmes who then transfers our data online



In any case we want to be prompt so we'll be included in the Membership Directory.

Newer members have individual membership years, depending on when they join the branch. For example, if Gini joins in September 2024, her membership renewal will be due September 2025. Confusing at times? Yes!

Please remember to complete and turn in the member volunteer form to help our branch leaders know who is willing to help with things like refreshments, welcoming members at events and more.

Let's shoot for the stars with a 100% renewal rate!!!

Vicky, Donna and Gloria are here to help.

It's time to enjoy the flowers – unless allergies get to you As our 2023-2024 AAUW year begins to wane, it's also time to self-reflect on our AAUW lives. Here's a checklist:

- **I did my part to welcome new members and make them feel included**
- **I participated in an interest group or outreach program**

- I invited one or more guests to a branch event
- I attended our Lights, Camera, Actions themed programs
- I renewed my membership promptly
- I donated to my favorite AAUW programs

Celebrating May Birthdays!

Happy Birthday to All!

- | | |
|------------------------|------|
| • Patricia Stillwell | 5/1 |
| • Patricia Morehead | 5/5 |
| • Janis Appel | 5/13 |
| • Margaret McCarthy | 5/16 |
| • Rosemary Howard | 5/18 |
| • Pat McCarty | 5/19 |
| • Deborah Dunn | 5/22 |
| • Maria Teresa Hoecker | 5/23 |
| • Cheryl Fuller | 5/24 |
| • Merrie McLaughlin | 5/26 |
| • Tamara Olson | 5/28 |
| • Patty Taylor | 5/29 |
| • Margot Leidig | 5/31 |



ARMCHAIR ACTIVISM By Kathy Papst



There are ways to be active with AAUW even if you don't have a lot of time to be involved or are not on the Board of Directors. The last event of the year will be the May meeting where we will vote for the next Board for 2024/2025. There is a break after that for the summer, but I encourage our members to keep our mission in your mind over the summer months. Both the national and state websites have ways to keep abreast of what is happening with legislation and continued efforts with equity for women and girls. This is an ongoing effort because those who oppose our efforts to achieve equity do not take a break from their efforts to thwart equity for 50 % of the population.

Both the national and state websites have ways to support legislation that AAUW supports without spending a lot of time. I am a member of the "Two Minute Activist" where you can support efforts to pass laws that AAUW is actively involved with. One would think that this doesn't have much clout, but having thousands of members who make their voice heard really makes our Congress and Senate members take notice.

It only takes “two minutes” to look at the legislation that helps assist change for future generations while sitting at home. All you need to do is go to AAUW.ORG and click on Two Minute Activist and sign your name in support for upcoming laws that may change the future for all women. There is a message that you can sign or you can add your own additional message to tell why you feel that this legislation is so important. Even if you do not do this, please keep reading and listening to news outlets that keep you informed with the latest news on women’s issues for our children and grandchildren’s future.

*****From the AAUW California Public Policy Committee:**

Please click [<here>](#) for the April issue of Public Policy News. This issue contains the article "AAUW California Public Policy Committee Sets 2024 Legislative Agenda" for inclusion in your branch newsletters.

AAUW California has requested we include this information in our Branch Newsletters:



This April, we will again vote on a bylaws amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for AAUW membership. The state board recently voted to support the move because they believe it will help AAUW become the inclusive organization that many of us strive to see. Our branch could join the effort to set AAUW up for success in the coming years.

Many of us have been in the situation of meeting prospective members who are interested in AAUW and share our mission of equity for women and girls. We are then faced with having to ask them about their educational attainment to see if they would qualify for membership. It is difficult to ask and can lead to embarrassment for the prospective member if they don’t meet the standard and the loss for us of their passion, skills, and potential contributions.

They cannot join due to a requirement that was established 143 years ago.

Over the years AAUW members have voted to modify the membership requirements to reflect the ever-changing social climate:

- 1949 – Allowed those with approved degrees from sanctioned and accredited four-year colleges or universities to join both National AND branches (which effectively allowed women of color to join AAUW)
- 1963- Admitted those holding degrees, including nursing, education and home economics, from any regionally accredited institution
- 1987 – Extended membership to male college graduates
- 2005 – Relaxed membership requirement to include graduates who hold an associate or equivalent degree from a qualified educational institution

How many potential members are we losing because AAUW has this eligibility requirement?

- We lose younger women and men who meet the education requirement but don't want to join an organization that seems elitist to them.
- We lose women and men who share our vision for the future but because of a myriad of circumstances they were not able to attain a college degree. This did not keep them from having careers or joining other activist organizations. They just cannot join AAUW.
- We lose donations from organizations that support our mission but do not understand why one must have a college degree to work towards gender equity.

Some members object to open membership because they wonder, "What will our name be?" AAUW's name doesn't need to change at all. We have been known as AAUW since the 1920s (two separate organizations merged) and so it has historic value as well as name recognition. We have allowed men to belong for nearly 40 years and no one felt the need for a change back then. We will be like other long-time organizations who have changed membership requirements over their histories but retained their names (e.g. GEICO, YMCA). When we talk about the organization, we can say "I belong to AAUW and we work for equity for women and girls." The initials are less important than our wonderful mission and actions.

While AAUW is an organization that fully supports women getting a college education in the field of their choice, we need to recognize that education comes in many forms. In our professional lives, we have worked with many women and men who did not have a formal degree. This is not a measure of intelligence or ability...sometimes it is the lack of opportunity or choices made early in life that are difficult to reverse. According to the 2021 Census, just 34% of Americans aged 25 to 29 years completed four years of college. We are missing out on many voices that we need in this fight for equity.

Throughout the past 143 years, AAUW members have never stopped advocating for education while expanding our focus on ensuring effective policies around family leave, reproductive rights, equal pay, and policies against sexual harassment and violence against women. Welcoming those without a degree will not change who we are and what we are working towards- it will enhance our efforts by including anyone who is as passionate as we are about equity for women and girls.

We need every woman and man who supports our mission – empowering women and girls – to join us in the ongoing challenge of achieving gender equity. **Voting opened April 3rd and closes at noon on May 15th.**

Our Sac State Interns Have Been Busy! By Liz Jordan and Gloria Yost

As previously noted, our Sacramento Branch board voted to create a new outreach program to provide internships in cooperation with CSUS Sociology Professor, Lina Rincon. The semester long internships began in January with students, Renee Walters and Alexis Perrott, doing research to learn about AAUW, and steps needed to successfully establish a new affiliate club on the CSUS campus.

They have completed an interest survey, worked through the steps to make our AAUW Student club official again, and organized a launch meeting, Women Talk Money, in early May. **We wish them great success!**

Sunshine Chair

Pat Winkle is our Sunshine Chair and **needs to hear from you** if you know members who might appreciate a get well, sympathy or “thinking of you” card. As she doesn’t know everyone, she needs your help in remembering our friends. Her contact information is in the directory.