

THE SPOKESWOMAN



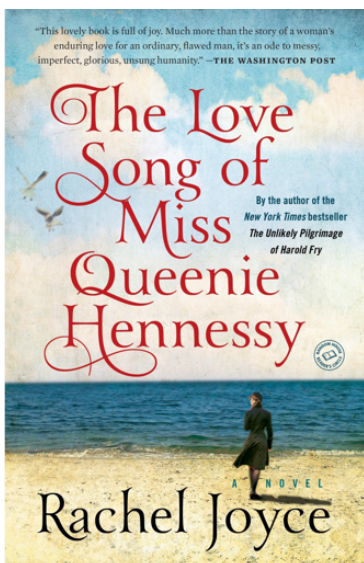
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JUNE 2021 CALENDAR

- **Thursday, June 10th:** 2021-22 Davis Branch Board Installation 5:30-7:00pm. Location: 747 Plum Lane (cul de sac end of Plum near the intersection of W. Eighth and Sycamore / event will be outside)
- **Saturday, June 12th at 9 am:** Book Group Discussion on Zoom
- **Thursday, June 17th at 1 pm:** Understanding Diversity Equity and Inclusion webinar
- **Friday, June 18th at 6 pm:** UNA Event, Migrant Women's Journey Across Borders on Zoom
- **Saturday, June 19th at 4 pm:** Celebrate the 19th with the UCD AAUW students sharing highlights of the National Conference of Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) on Zoom

REPORT FOR BOOK GROUP MEETING May 8



The May book selection for discussion was *The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy* by Rachel Joyce. Participating were: Rose Mary Forehand, Verena Borton, Estelle Shiroma, Barbara Durst, Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt, Nan Yates, Helen Thompson, Juliana Wells, and Rhonda Reed (while driving through Kansas!). Rhonda showed her dogs and some views from her car as she traveled towards Virginia for a retriever competition. During the Zoom meeting, the electricity in parts of Davis went out and we lost Helen and Verena in the midst of discussion.

We had previously read *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, written by the same author, but there were still lingering questions that we hoped would be answered by reading this companion book. After a brief discussion of what everyone was reading or doing, Nan started us by commenting that Sister Inconnu meant 'unknown sister'. That made a difference in story interpretation for some. All this writing was in Queenie's imagination. Could she have confided in anyone else? Did Queenie ever really love Harold Fry? There was lots of humor in the writing.

Estelle read an interview with the author. Joyce said the story was a metaphysical journey with Fry, expressing the seven stages of grieving. Queenie accepted her grief and the need for hospice. We have made death fearful so learning to die is important, as well as learning to live. We discussed our individual wishes. Barbara showed us an urn for herself. Decisions about embalming, or not, need to be made with a natural burial in mind, if you wish to be laid to rest in a forest. Some did not like the idea of ashes tossed into the ocean and such.

Rhonda thought it was unusual to have an actual presence at death. One can plan to have someone there at the very end, but in our shared experiences we found that our loved ones tend to let go when the most important person is NOT

there. She thinks people can choose their exact moment. Barbara shared that her father died at home and said that hospice carried him out the front door. Stephanie thinks it's good to allow a person to go -- to "give permission". The story led to a discussion about the last stages of death. One can just stay near the person who is dying. A relevant book is *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert Langley. There are so many different ways people treat the dead and their ashes.

Estelle asked what everyone thought of David, Harold Fry's son. He was not likeable and unhappy, eventually committing suicide. David was very non-social. He wanted attention, so he was a misfit. Was Queenie an enabler? David was a foil between Harold and Queenie and Harold and Maureen. Queenie lived with a lot of guilt regarding David's death, so writing helped her. The author tackled mental illness and falling off the path and not being afraid to talk about it. At the end, Harold and Maureen were at the beach with the curtain removed, giving us hope.

We all enjoyed the author's descriptions of landscapes. Barbara especially liked the way Queenie was able to recall memories of her old house. The map of her garden with flowers and driftwood figures representing people in her life was interesting, too. She let the weeds grow, since she couldn't control them.

The book selected for discussion on June 12th is *Chokecherry Girl* by Barbara Link, who will join us for the meeting on Zoom. On July 10th, we will discuss *Of Women and Salt* by Gabriela Garcia.

May 2021 Board Meeting Highlights

In attendance: Shahla Farahnak, Leslie Rubin, Juliana Wells, Laleh Rastegarzadeh, Gail Johnson, Stephanie DeGarff-Hunt, Estelle Shiroma and interns Alexandra Vigil and Zoe Boomershine.

Reminder: Any branch member is welcome at Board meetings

Gail updated the Board on the various elements in the **treasurer's report** that had been circulated before the meeting. There was a motion, passed unanimously, to pay UCD the \$35 registration fee for the AAUW Student Organization at UCD.

Six students are scheduled to participate in the virtual **NCCWSL** (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders) later in May.

The **annual funds letter** has been updated by Estelle and will be sent to 45* active members via email, to be submitted with appropriate payment to Gail at her Winters address by June 25.

*Welcome to new member Cathy Tkach, 4006 Nandina Place, Davis, CA 95618 (530-304-8783)

The planned **May Celebrate the NineTEAnth** had to be postponed until July for logistical reasons. This being Women's Health Month, Laleh suggested viewing a webinar, "Breaking the Plastic Habit," beforehand and discussing it on May 19th. See our Celebrate the 19th recap for a review of that event.

The **business meeting to install officers and new Board members** will tentatively be held outdoors, in person, on **June 10th at 5:30** at Estelle's cul-de-sac. Light refreshments and drinks.

Planning committee: Gail, Juliana, Shahla and Estelle.

Leslie reported good progress on the **Welcome Packet** for new members (almost finished) and reminded all Board members to **send a headshot** to Alexandra to be included in the welcome mail.

Annual retreat to plan our vision of priorities for the upcoming year tentatively scheduled for August 7 in person. Details yet to be worked out.

Student Organization has 10 active members. Postponed panel discussion until summer, still unsure of specific focus.

UNA update included an account of a very **effective UNA California advocacy** meeting with Senator Alex Padilla's legislative staff on May 5, a number of reports on webinars shared with other UNA chapters and partnership organizations, a semi-annual **UNA NorCal Division** meeting on May 25 (with impressive attendance from the Davis chapter), and upcoming national **UNA-USA Week of Action** in early June.

Book Group still meets virtually (works well for 9 a.m. meeting time). **June 12** will feature author **Barbara Link** as we discuss her book *Chokecherry Girl*. The **July** selection is *Of Women and Salt* by Gabriela Garcia.

Student Interns. Zoe will continue working on the **website – added a section on the home page for the Spokeswoman**. Will get further information regarding Google Analytics. Alexandra sends out **emails** including Spokeswoman, works diligently on formatting and adding information to the **Spokeswoman** and works on **Welcome Packet**. Alexandra is graduating this summer and has started job hunting in the field of International Relations.

May Celebrate the 19th Recap

Shahla, Estelle, Laleh, Verena, Stephanie, Alexandra and Zoe attended a far-ranging discussion, moderated by Laleh, based on having viewed a webinar on “Breaking the Plastic Habit” beforehand. Laleh had recommended this webinar featuring a lively conversation between Judith Enck, founder and CEO of Beyond Plastics and Skip Backus of the Omega Center for Sustainable Living – covering the incredible worldwide extent and danger of plastic pollution, health and environmental effects, plastics and oil production, recycling myths and realities, and actions we can take to address the myriad problems that plastics cause. It was an appropriate choice for Women’s Health Month, illustrated most graphically by the fact that scientists have detected microplastics in human placenta.

In the realm of recycling, we were astonished to learn that basically only plastic items with #1 and #2 are truly recyclable and black plastic is not at all. Fossil fuel companies that thrive on the lucrative manufacture of plastic trick the public into believing that all plastic can be recycled, a cruel myth. Shipping unsorted and largely unacceptable, dangerous recycled waste to poor countries is a huge moral as well as an environmental issue.

Judith Enck, former EPA regional administrator in the Obama administration, effectively and with a healthy sense of humor, shared scientific research on how plastics affect nature as well as humans, influence global warming and constitute a major factor in our current unsustainable lifestyle. When asked to list five actions we all could or should take, these were her suggestions:

- Advocate to pass the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2021 (S 984 and HR 2238)
- Stop subsidizing fossil fuels
- Thoroughly educate yourself about these environmental issues
- Provide financial support to groups who work on these issues (like Beyond Plastics)
- Get big money out of politics
- Skip Backus added a sixth: watch The Story of Plastic (go to Watch the Story of Plastic.org)

A recurring theme was the need for a countrywide bottle bill and streamlined recycling policies. In a discussion following the April webinar we had noted the difference in recycling regulations even in close proximity in Yolo County, between Davis and Winters.

We asked our interns Alexandra and Zoe at what age they started becoming acutely aware of the importance of recycling, assuming this would have begun early in elementary school. Both said it was mentioned in school, but in very general terms and without in-depth background or much direct application in practice. Stephanie and Verena described longtime, multi-faceted recycling programs in the Davis elementary schools where they used to teach. Once more we became aware of a generational gap in awareness and habits surrounding the concept of recycling and reusing, and the obvious need for increased public education.

For those who missed this recommended webinar, here is the link again:

<https://www.eomega.org/videos/breaking-the-plastic-habit#>

UNA Updates

- **The UN in AAUW policies.** While reading all the material provided before the national AAUW election, I came across the following statements that are a good reminder of why the partnership between our AAUW branch and the Davis UNA chapter is more than coincidental:

“We support a strengthened United Nations and its affiliated agencies. We advocate implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from the 4th World Conference on Women and subsequent declarations. We affirm our active participation in the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women and our commitment to ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). We support international family planning programs that are consistent with AAUW policy.”

“Support for U.N. programs that address human rights and women’s and girls’ concerns.”

- UNA’s virtual **Week of Action** takes place June 6 -11 with hundreds (possibly 2-3 thousand) attendees, providing informative presentations with a host of speakers including **U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield**, advocacy training for virtual meetings with Senators and Representatives, and unlimited opportunities to connect with experts and fellow UNA members from around the country.

- **Advocacy.** On May 5, 45 California UNA members, including two representing Davis met with two members of **Senator Alex Padilla’s** legislative staff for half an hour. Presentations were carefully planned out during a practice session two days prior and as a result the session was very effective, with seven speakers touching concisely on full funding for the UN, human rights, the Sustainable Development Goals, health issues, pay and gender equity, CEDAW, border issues and climate action. The staff members offered some comments, particularly on policies supported by Padilla, and appeared genuinely appreciative of the extensive information provided that clearly demonstrated UNA members’ passion for the critical role played by the UN. During the practice session I had expressed disappointment at the generic and undetailed replies to advocacy appeals I had received from Padilla’s office up

until then. Within days of our meeting, the office began sending very detailed and informative responses to advocacy appeals. We can't be certain, but this might be a direct result of our productive session on May 5.

During the Week of Action, members of the California delegation will have a similar meeting with **Senator Dianne Feinstein** or her legislative staff, as we have for numerous years. Additionally, we expect a meeting with **Congressman John Garamendi** or his staff. These meetings are all being organized by the national UNA staff in Washington, DC and we are still awaiting final details.

- **Partnerships.** During this "Zoom Era" our chapter continues to benefit from partnerships with other chapters or different groups, sharing programs and enlarging the outreach in every direction. For a small chapter such as ours, this is very helpful and may likely continue to an extent even after we return to in-person events.

- **UNICEF.** The Davis community, under the umbrella of UNA-Davis, has for decades promoted and organized support for UNICEF, with as its focus **Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF** by school children. We have been very successful at it and as a result, we were approached recently by the U.S. Committee for UNICEF headquarters with a request to participate in an interview with a consulting firm they have hired to determine the likely/feasible future form of Trick-or-Treat. The interviewer talked to the three of us who coordinate the traditional Davis effort. The extent of involvement of the schools, the children, the teachers, the parents, general community members, and even City Council, First Northern Bank and the Davis Enterprise was an eye-opener for someone who perhaps had thought more in terms of a few children going door to door on Halloween. We don't know what the immediate future of UNICEF's motto "Children helping children" will hold by next fall, but it was gratifying to have our longtime process recognized and appreciated.

- **Upcoming Virtual Event:** UNA-USA Sacramento Virtual Event on June 18 at 6 pm: Migrant Women's Journey Across Borders. Panelists will discuss why women leave their home countries, what happens to them once they get there, and what we can do. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Upcoming Membership Renewal

It is time to renew your membership for fiscal year 2021-2022! Please continue to support our local ongoing projects and educational programs that promote **AAUW's Mission** to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Membership in AAUW-Davis (\$21), AAUW-California (\$20) and the National Association (\$62; *\$59 of the National fee is tax-deductible as a charitable contribution) costs a total of \$103 per year. Member dues currently account for 13 percent of AAUW's annual budget. They help to sustain and grow AAUW's programs and work that advances equity for women and girls. A combination of dues, donations, and corporate and foundation funding is critical to supporting AAUW's salary negotiation workshops, groundbreaking research, advocacy efforts, campus leadership programs, and so much more.

Association Life Members pay only State and Branch annual dues. For the dues to be filed with the National Association on time, **please mail in your renewal membership dues with the member renewal [form](#) before June 25, 2021** to Gail Johnson at 955 Wyatt Lane, Winters, CA 95694. The Branch has established an "angel" fund to help with partial dues payments if your financial situation makes it difficult for you to rejoin. For "Angel Fund" assistance or if you have any questions regarding membership, please email Gail Johnson at gejohnson08@comcast.net or call her at (530) 383-0881.

**Regardless of your level of participation,
we appreciate your membership!**

AAUW CA and National Updates

AAUW Offering a New Equity Certificate Program for Professionals **“Social Change Ambassador Certificate”**

The Social Change Ambassador certificate program is a seven-week series of virtual learning and networking sessions intended for individuals who want to make the world a better place by making workplace practices more inclusive and equitable. After completing the program, participants will earn a certificate that they can use on their resume and LinkedIn profile.

Beginning June 22, the curriculum covers:

- Intersectionality 101
- Communicating for Inclusion
- Unconscious Bias and Dominant Culture
- Advocacy & Action
- Leading the New Normal.

Is there a Social Change Ambassador in your life? Do you know a recent college graduate or a young person early in their career, perhaps aged 21 to 30? Encourage them to seize this opportunity. As an AAUW member and for only \$25, you can sponsor a young professional's journey to becoming a changemaker in their career field. Click [HERE](#) for registration information.

AAUW National Election Results

AAUW National's proposed bylaws amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for membership did not pass. The ballot initiative to eliminate the membership requirement got 63% of the vote, which was just below the two-thirds majority needed to enact a bylaw change.

Click [HERE](#) for a detailed breakdown of the election results and percentages by state. A large number of California members voted.

AAUW-CA Up for Five Star Status

From the AAUW California Connection June 2021 Edition:
“AAUW California is in the running for 5-star status in National’s recognition program. Yep. Us. And some of the criteria were hard, like 90%(!!) of our branches hosting at least two (!!) programs related to National’s goals. Thanks go out to all of our branch leaders and members. Once confirmed, we will be the third state to earn this honor.” Click [HERE](#) to read more on the AAUW 5-Star Program.

Upcoming June Webinars

AAUW DEI Toolkit: Understanding Diversity Equity and Inclusion

Thursday, June 17, 2021 4:00pm EDT (1:00 pm PDT)

Are you interested in exploring Diversity, Equity and Inclusion topics, but don't know where to start? Confused by the many key terms and concepts? Wondering what IS the difference between diversity, equity and inclusion?

AAUW's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plug and Play Programming is a way to help branches create programming and events around the topics included in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Toolkit. Join national Inclusion & Equity Committee members Melissa Ingram, Jesse Ohrenberger, and Constance Hope on June 17 to discuss our newest Plug and Play Program: Understanding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to learn about key terms and concepts within Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that will help you create branch programming to achieve your equity and inclusion goals.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

AAUW-CA Webinar Recordings Available

There are no upcoming AAUW-CA webinars in June. However, 21 previous webinars are up for viewing on the AAUW-CA website [HERE](#).

Welcome Baby Sophie!

Congratulations to Shahla Farahnak and her family on the birth of Shahla's new granddaughter, Sophie! Baby Sophie was born on May 27th, 2021 and weighed 7 lbs. and 11oz.



BE AS ACTIVE AS YOU CAN, BUT STAY A MEMBER.