

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2021

THE SPOKESWOMAN

<https://davis-ca.aauw.net>

Annual Holiday Gathering

The annual holiday gathering will be held on **Saturday, December 11th at 2 pm** at the home of Stephanie Degraff-Hunt at 2137 St. Elias Place in Davis. Come to hear about [Empower Yolo](#), a local organization that provides community services to improve the health, social, educational, and economic outcomes of Yolo County residents.

We will be collecting donations from their Wish List that include:

- Hand sanitizer
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Disinfecting cleaning supplies (Clorox wipes; Lysol spray)
- Diapers (size 5 & 6)
- Baby wipes
- Trash bags (30 gallon size)
- Dish soap
- Antibacterial liquid hand soap (pumps & refill size)
- Laundry soap
- Latex gloves
- Face masks
- Hygiene items (deodorant, body wash, lotion, toothpaste, chapstick)
- Snacks and drinks for kids
- Food store gift cards (grocery stores, Walmart, Target, local restaurants)
- Gift cards (gas cards, CVS, Rite Aid, Walgreens)
- Art supplies, craft sets & educational materials for children
- Housing items – “Rooms to Go” – any items you would need to start over in an apartment for kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and laundry room

If you are not able to attend but would still like to donate items, please e-mail Estelle at estelle.shiroma@gmail.com or Stephanie at sdegraffhunt@gmail.com

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Nov.- Dec. Calendar

Saturday, December 4th, 10:30 am-noon
Northern CA UNA Division Meeting

Saturday, December 11th, 9 am - Book Group Meeting

Saturday, December 11th, 2pm - Annual Holiday Gathering

Saturday, January 8th at 9 am - book TBD; check for updates by email

Thursday, January 13th at 7 pm - Board meeting

Saturday, January 29th 10:00am to Noon - Virtual Annual Fund event - check email and January Spokeswoman for registration information

October Celebrate the 19th Recap

On October 19th Professor Emerita of the UC Davis Law School and AAUW member Marty West led us in a discussion under the heading “Current Status of Abortion Legislation – Where do we go from here?”

Marty studied and taught gender discrimination and family protection law. We asked her to talk about and answer questions regarding the new Texas abortion law. The Supreme Court did not block the strict and unprecedented enactment of the abortion ruling that went into effect on September 1 and hands enforcement to private citizens. It is a complex issue, but since there was no defendant, the court had no one to enjoin. The Supreme Court’s action (or lack thereof) was shocking to many. The court will have to determine the constitutionality of the law. A case from Mississippi will be heard at the beginning of December. Marty hopes that the respect for the Supreme Court will be protected by Chief Justice John Robert’s lead as a constitutionalist.

Someone asked why abortion is such a big issue. It involves privacy and women’s rights. Marty believes the ERA (for which she campaigned) was defeated because when it was close to passing the abortion issue and religion took the focus away from women’s rights.

To help women in Texas and Mississippi, Marty suggested giving money to organizations that will help women leave the state and support clinics that can provide abortion pills, contraceptives and information. Pills are regulated by state law and can be legal prior to viability.

There was brief reference to partial birth abortion, the precedent of a law decision in Massachusetts where the state was not allowed to empower local citizens (as the Texas law does), and the relatively easy access to birth control for California students.

The group agreed that to minimize abortions, we need more sex education and better access to contraception. Limiting or denying access is another way to control women.

Thank you, Marty, for guiding the conversation and providing facts.

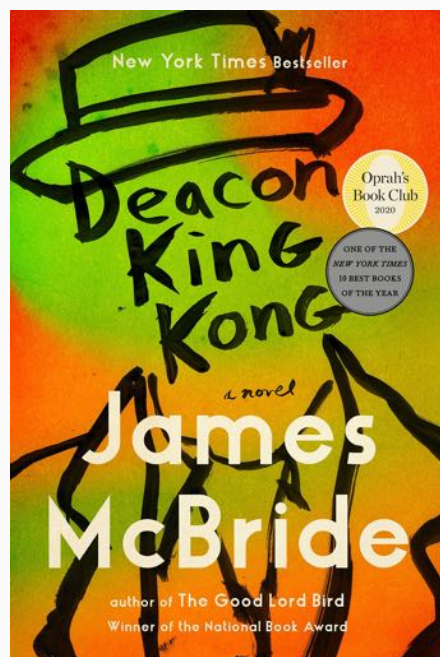
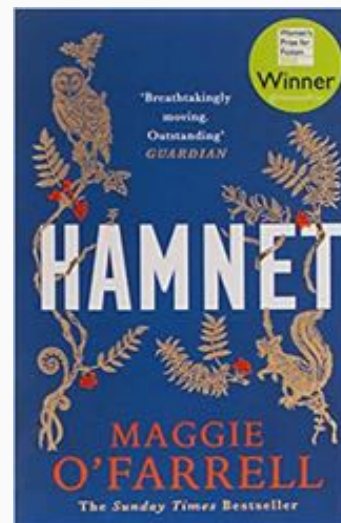
“AAUW supports choice in determining one’s reproductive life and increased access to health care and family planning services.”

October and November Book Group Recaps

The October 9th virtual meeting was attended by eight participants who discussed “Hamnet” by Maggie O’Farrell. Karen Lemcke informed us that the book was one of the Top 10 from the N.Y. Times list. The main plot featured the death of Shakespeare’s son, Hamnet, due to the Bubonic Plague in the 1500s. Other themes involved marriage, motherhood, loss, and grief.

The story is focused on the life of Agnes and her husband, William Shakespeare, but he is not referred to by name in the story...just by father, husband, and Latin tutor. Without identifying Shakespeare by name, the author wrote so the reader had no preconceptions of the character. After the loss of Hamnet, Shakespeare retreats into his work in London and lives far away from his family. In the 1500s, it was common to honor a death with silence, not mentioning their names or talking about their exploits. Agnes, a strong woman, was an exception to that response. She used her grief to help others with her gift as a healer. Several of us identified with the loss of a child and shared different approaches to dealing with loss and grief.

The book also described the plague and its spread, the devastation it caused and the largely unsuccessful methods of treatment. One chapter describes in great detail how the infection of one flea bite in one part of the world travels through chance encounters to ultimately land in England. The spread of the plague 400 years ago parallels our experience with the COVID-19 pandemic. The book ends with the words “remember me”.



The November 11th book group meeting started with a brief discussion of rain, fog, and collapsing roofs, before the ten of us started to discuss “Deacon King Kong” by James McBride. Stephanie shared her research about the author. He was a musician and a journalist, as well as the author of a number of award-winning books. McBride was also awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Obama in 2015 for his writings that “humanized the complexities of discussing racism in America”. Those who listened to the audio version really enjoyed it. All in all, participants said it was an enjoyable book.

There are 134 characters in the book, making it difficult to keep track at times. McBride wrote with a strong criticism of poverty and housing projects, but also highlighted the importance of community in these settings. He grew up in the Projects himself. Several readers said the first two sentences drew them into the book. There was much humor throughout (not necessarily a quiet read!). We learned more about life in the Projects, the Black church, and ghetto dialogue. The missing Christmas Club money, the search for a special artifact under “the palm of His hand”, the identity of the cheese donor, and the March of the Ants were mysteries that piqued reader interest. The importance of the garden at the Five Ends Baptist Church inspired some to research pokeweed and moon flowers.

The book group meets on the second Saturday of every month. All are welcome to join the meetings, even if you haven’t read the book. The next book for our December 11th discussion is “The Paris Library” by Janet Skeslien Charles, inspired by the true story of librarians at the American Library in Paris during World War II. Karen (lemckekaren@yahoo.com) asked us to e-mail her with three book recommendations with a brief description by Dec. 11th. The group will vote on the next quarter of reading selections.

The Woodland AAUW book group is reading “The Mystery of Mrs. Christie: A Novel” by Heather Terrell. Contact Barbara Durst (bdurst@mac.com) for more information if you’d like to join their book group discussion.

October and November Board Meeting Updates

Davis Branch board meetings were held on October 14th and November 11th. The October board meeting started with a meet and greet of new Branch interns, Beth Miller and Aislinn Sahrang. Zoe Boomershine will continue as the lead intern providing training, as well as support during the transition of Alexandra Vigil's duties to Beth and Aislinn. The discussions at both October and November board meetings included a review of finances, membership, book group, and United Nations Association updates and planning of November-January events. Rhonda reported on the Capital Counties Interbranch Council Annual AAUW Fund event, which will be held virtually on January 30th. Three fellows or grant recipients of AAUW funds will be invited to speak at this event. Registration details will be available soon. Gail provided an update on Tech Trek and so far, it looks like an in-person Tech Trek camp will be held in 2022; however, the details are still being worked out.

During both meetings discussions of the changes and improvements to the Spokeswoman were discussed. Estelle recommended combining November and December issues and the Board agreed with her suggestion. Estelle and Stephanie are the lead coordinators for the annual Holiday gathering. Empower Yolo has been invited to speak at this gathering and further details are forthcoming. It was also decided that the November Celebrate the 19th would be held at Pizza and Pints on Friday, November 19th at 5:30 pm. Board members were looking forward to the in-person gathering with our members, new interns, and UC Davis student members.

There will be no board meeting in December.

Meet Our New Interns!



Beth is originally from Ventura, CA, and is currently studying Political Science at UC Davis. She aspires to contribute towards a progressive society through her work in law and politics. She's also written several articles for the Vanguard Court Watch Program and spends her free time participating in the UC Davis MockTrial Program.

Aislinn is excited to start working with AAUW Davis as an intern in charge of social media outreach. She is a junior at UC Davis majoring in Political Science. In her free time, she enjoys sewing, spending time outdoors, and playing music with her family. She hopes to pursue a career in law or government. She is eager to get to know members of AAUW Davis and become more involved in the community.



End of Year Appeal

Since 1881, AAUW has assisted women in overcoming adversity and helping women to accomplish their dreams. We have made progress in advancing equity for women and girls, but challenges still exist. Your donation can have a significant impact on the success of the programs that AAUW funds, including:

- The AAUW California Tech Trek summer camp provides a supportive environment for 7th grade girls to develop their interests in STEM-related fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) that can help them make future academic and career choices. The Davis Branch board voted to decline sending girls to the 2021 Tech Trek camp as we felt a virtual camp would not offer the full benefits of a hands on, in-person experience. Gifts will be allocated for 2022 scholarships.
- The AAUW Greatest Needs Fund is an unrestricted fund that provides AAUW the flexibility to respond rapidly to new and emerging challenges facing women and girls and to use your gift where it is needed most. This fund ensures the strength, relevance, and visibility of AAUW into the future.
- The Economic Security Fund ensures livelihoods for women through achieving pay equity for women, providing training in salary negotiation, and improving women's retirement security and quality of life.
- The Education and Training Fund addresses the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women by championing equal access to education and ensuring that education at every level is free from sex discrimination.

Every gift makes an impact; every gift can change someone's life. Please make checks payable to: AAUW (If you choose a specific fund, please note it on your check.) For TechTrek donations, please make checks payable to AAUW CA-SPF.

Checks should be mailed to Gail Johnson at 955 Wyatt Lane, Winters, California 95694 by December 24th. Contributions to these funds are fully tax-deductible. Thank you for your generosity.

UNA Updates



UNA USA
Davis Chapter

After a series of shared programs for **United Nations Day**, notably a presentation on Afghanistan hosted by the Golden Empire chapter, the Sacramento chapter's focus on "Together for Earth," and the national UNA-USA collection of speeches and events surrounding the theme "Creating a Blueprint for a Better Tomorrow," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXMNIzHHIuk>, the focus turned to **COP26**, the climate conference that took place in Glasgow through Nov. 13.

A regional UNA follow-up report on COP26 was planned for November 20. Due to unforeseen circumstances it was cancelled on Nov. 16 and those interested were urged to join the FREE program "COP26 and Beyond" sponsored by UNA Scotland and UNA-USA on November 20 at 7 a.m. Pacific time.

Featured speakers included:

- Dr Carl Wright, Elected Trustee UNA-UK and Chair Canterbury Climate Action Partnership
- Mr David Levaï, Fellow for International Climate Policy and Diplomacy, UN Foundation



There will be a **Post COP26 Climate Justice & Children's Rights** conversation on Friday, December 3rd, Hawaii & California UNA, 1 p.m. (see bottom right flyer)

The traditional Davis community UNICEF campaign under the UNA Davis umbrella was modified due to the pandemic, essentially moving online. Gone are the iconic little orange boxes! However, the chapter continues to maintain a special bank account designated solely for tax-deductible UNICEF donations. We welcome donations of any size made out to UNICEF (UNA-USA Account) sent or delivered to First Northern Bank, 434 Second Street, Davis, CA 95616. Total deposits will be mailed to the U.S. Committee for UNICEF in mid-December. The need to provide life-saving support from shelter to medicines to education for children around the world, our future, is greater than ever. Why not celebrate Universal Children's Day (November 20) by sending a donation to UNICEF at the above address?

A Northern California UNA Division meeting for all chapters in our region is planned for December 4, 10:30am - noon.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87898685220?>



AAUW CA/National News

AAUW Welcomes Its New CEO

After 17 years at AAUW, Gloria L. Blackwell took on a new role: CEO. “I am incredibly honored and grateful to the Board for valuing my commitment to global gender equity, my leadership at AAUW, and the contributions of my high-performing teams,” said Blackwell.



AAUW is 140 years old! AAUW California is 100 years old!



AAUW California began when the San Francisco Branch was established in 1884. By 1921, with thirteen active branches in the state, branch leaders saw a need for a statewide organization. The constitution for AAUW California was approved in October 1921. In 2021 AAUW California is an active and diverse organization for women and men with nearly 9,500 members in 119 branches.

NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS

Charmen Goehring, Nominations & Elections Chair, nominating@aauw-ca.org

Submitted by Jane Niemeier to the November 2021 *Board to Board*

WHY YOU SHOULD RUN FOR THE STATE BOARD!

You may wonder why anyone would want to serve on the state board, and I can tell you that it is a wonderful experience. I served on the state board from 2014 to 2020, first as a director, then as co-president-elect,

What I need to know: Serving on the state board can be rewarding for many reasons.

What I need to do: Review the responsibilities of a state director and then as co-president. I loved meeting women from all over the state who shared my passion for AAUW.

There are many other benefits to serving on the state board. Directors will gain leadership and speaking skills, and they will act as liaisons between the branches and the state. They will bring a variety of viewpoints to the board and get to plan state activities.

The board meets monthly via Zoom for a touch base meeting on the months that they don't have a leadership meeting. The four leadership meetings will continue to be via Zoom next year. The hours that are required are based on the position.

To learn more about the election process and to submit a nomination, click [HERE](#)

Do you have a branch member who might be interested in serving or perhaps you would like to serve? Just let us know by contacting nominating@aauw-ca.org.

AAUW CA/National News Continued

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION NEWS

Elaine Johnson, Director and Janice Lee, DEI Committee Co-Chairs diversity@aauw-ca.org

EXTENDING THE MAGIC OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL GROUPS

Many religious and secular holidays will be observed during the upcoming winter months, providing opportunities to recognize and appreciate the richness of living in a multicultural society. It can also create underlying tensions when groups feel their holidays are not appreciated.

AAUW’s efforts to create diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization and the larger society we live in, call for us to consider how to make holiday celebrations more meaningful and inclusive. Here are some suggestions to foster understanding and awareness of each other’s holiday traditions:

- Create a multicultural committee.
- Be respectful of how people observe different religious holidays. Avoid scheduling mistakes by checking an interfaith, multicultural calendar or winter celebrations calendar.
- Provide food options that respect different dietary and cultural needs.
- Seek ways to make decorations inclusive and explain the religious traditions they represent.



Make gift exchanges optional as they may cause disappointment or misunderstanding for the recipient or hardships for the giver. Create awareness of different customs throughout the year.

Invite feedback and member suggestions for next year’s celebrations.

Don’t be too hard on yourself for inevitable omissions and oversights.

Several branches have begun inclusive holiday practices and are happy to share their experiences with others. Please send your successful holiday stories to DEI Chair, Elaine Johnson, at diversity@aauw-ca.org.

Inclusivity is more than exchanging “Happy Holidays” for “Merry Christmas.” It is celebrating the friendship and understanding that develops from using holidays to bring different people together, and in the process, to create awareness of each other’s traditions and beliefs.

An Update on the Paradise Branch from Carol Holzgrafe

As the November 8, 2018 Paradise Camp Fire anniversary nears, those of us who received so much help from AAUW members in California and elsewhere, want to give an update and renew our thanks.

One small plea posted on the AAUW California website and a few emails asking for help brought tens of thousands of dollars in gift cards, offers of housing, furniture, and, in the case of a member who couldn’t get her garage door open and had no replacement insurance—a car. The Paradise board, all of whom (except yours truly) lost everything, gathered frequently to sort mail and distribute the contributions to 35 of our 40 members. After their needs were fulfilled, we gave cards and checks to our Tech Trek families, most of whom also lost everything and often had fewer resources. We offered gas money to the son of Suzy and Paul Ernst, the couple who were trapped by the fire and spent many months in the U.C. Davis Burn Center. There were so many ways everyone’s contributions helped.

From all of us, thank you!

Carol Holzgrafe and every AAUW Paradise member

Upcoming Webinars

Finders Keepers-Recruiting and Retaining Members

Members, members, wherefore art thou, members? AAUW branches must keep their member rosters healthy in order to continue their impactful work. Attend this webinar to explore new and creative ideas from successful branches for finding and keeping our best asset!

Date: January 11, 2022 (rescheduled from November)

Time: 7 pm

Speakers: Sharyn Siebert and Carol Holzgrafe, State Directors

Registration required: Click [Here](#)

AAUW 140th Anniversary Celebration

Join AAUW for a celebratory event honoring our rich past and looking ahead to a bright—and equitable—future. We'll share an interview with our distinguished 2021 Alumnae Recognition Awardee, recognize notable branch birthdays, and hear from our board chair Julia Brown and new CEO Gloria L. Blackwell.

Date: Nov 17, 2021 04:00 PM Eastern Time

Register [HERE](#)

A Senior Leader Roundtable

This final conversation of the three-part webinar series, Equal Pay Every Day (focusing on employers in the New York area), is intended for senior leaders who want to ensure their organizations foster fairness. We'll ask executives across industries to speak to the responsibility they have as employers to compensate all employees fairly, and why doing so enables them to attract—and retain—the best and brightest. Featured Speaker Cheryl Brennan, executive director, Sister To Sister, International, Inc. (STSI)

Date: 12 p.m. ET on Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Register [HERE](#)

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