

JULY 2022

THE SPOKESWOMAN

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

Message from Outgoing President Shahla

It has been a privilege and a delight to serve as the President of the branch from 2020-22. Over the years, I have truly been inspired and motivated by the dedication and hard work of our board members in promoting and implementing the mission of AAUW. I am pleased to congratulate and welcome Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt as the new President of the branch effective July 1, 2022. Stephanie has been a very active board member and is stepping into this position with a very strong interest in creating a visible presence for the branch in the community and expanding our connection with the United Nations Association and the UC Davis student organization. She brings new energy and fresh ideas to leading the branch and we look forward to supporting her in accomplishing her goals.



Shahla Farahnak

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July-August Calendar

Saturday, July 9 at 9 am – Zoom Book Group Discussion on "The Rose Code: A Novel" by Kate Quinn

Thursday, July 14 at 7 pm – Zoom Board Meeting

Sunday, July 17 to 23 – Tech Trek camp at UC Davis

Tuesday, July 19 – Celebrate the 19th is canceled this month due to Tech Trek activities

Saturday, August 6, 9 am to noon – Board Planning Retreat

Saturday, August 13 at 9 am – Zoom Book Group Discussion on "The Night Portrait: A Novel of World War II and Da Vinci's Italy" by Laura Morelli

Celebrate the 19th on June 18th

Only four of us – Estelle, Stephanie, Juliana and Verena – were able to gather on zoom the Saturday before Father’s Day to tell stories about our fathers. Being such a small, intimate group we felt encouraged to share many quite personal reflections on our relationships with our fathers, placing the remembrances in historical and geographic context spread over an entire century. The stories we told touched on mothers and other influential male figures in our lives as well. It was an interesting, insightful and meaningful hour as we got to know each other a little better on a different level from our usual AAUW interactions.

Congratulations, Zoë!



Intern Zoë Boomershine graduated from UC Davis in June with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology and a minor in Community Development. As a student intern to the branch since 2020, Zoë was responsible for updating the branch website and produced beautiful graphics, such as the annual Year in Review. She was the lead intern working with Beth and Aislinn during the 2021-22 academic year. She recently returned from a celebratory trip to the UK and Scotland with her family. During the summer she will live in Arizona while seeking a job in Human Resources. In appreciation for Zoë’s hard work over her two-year internship, the Davis branch gave her a one-year AAUW membership and encouraged her to stay in touch with us. We wish Zoë well in her future endeavors and thank her for a job well done!

Debbie Poulos and Alexandra Vigil: 2021 Named Gift Honorees

The Named Gift honor is awarded to recognize extraordinary work, time, and energy in support of the programs and goals of AAUW. Due to the generous contributions our members made to the AAUW Fund in 2021, branch donations have been designated in the names of Debbie Poulos and Alexandra Vigil as Named Gift Honorees.

We celebrate Debbie's significant contributions to the Davis community and branch in support of the AAUW mission. We are proud to recognize Debbie and Alexandra for their dedication.



Debbie, a retired elementary school teacher, served as Davis branch president from 1978 to 1979. Her contributions to the community extend beyond AAUW. She was a Davis City Council member from 1984 to 1988 and served as the Davis Teachers Association president from 1992 to 1994 and from 1998 to 2000. After being diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), Debbie retired from teaching in 1999. She authored and published “The Conscious Teacher” in 2019, a book for new and continuing teachers, as well as parents of K-6 grade students. Debbie is an avid quilter and since 2000, has produced hundreds of quilts for family and friends, charities, and quilt shows. She currently designs quilts that are finished with the help of friends.

Debbie Poulos and Alexandra Vigil: 2021 Named Gift Honorees Continued...



Alexandra came to the Davis branch as a student intern in 2020 while completing her undergraduate studies in International Relations at UC Davis. Despite the challenges of working remotely due to the pandemic, Alexandra quickly demonstrated initiative in helping wherever she was needed. Alexandra researched and developed a new format for the Spokeswoman newsletter, collated news articles from the national and California AAUW communications, and streamlined our communications using a new email manager, MailChimp. We are happy to have Alexandra as a new board member and welcome her youthful perspective and ideas.

June 25 Highlights: AAUW-CA Meet and Greet, Board Installation, and Tech Trek Welcome

On June 25, members Stephanie, Rhonda, and Estelle met informally with 2022-24 AAUW-CA President Sandi Gabe and the new State board members. They were in town for a planning retreat at the Hyatt Place on the UC Davis campus. During a walk to the Saturday Farmer's Market, Stephanie and Rhonda were tour guides, showing them places of interest on campus and providing pointers on navigating the Farmer's Market. Stephanie said it was fun to show off a bit of Davis history and tradition. Estelle met the group at the Farmer's Market, where they conversed with Sandi about the national website and challenges facing AAUW in the coming year. Stephanie said that meeting the board was an opportunity to share personal interests, as well as goals and plans for the future. It truly takes the dedication of women with a clear focus to make AAUW goals and values a reality.

Later that day, the 2022-23 Davis Branch board was installed at a gathering of members held at Gail Johnson's beautiful new home in Winters. The incoming board include:



From left to right: Mom Bessie, Logan, Athena, and Mom Gina

Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt, President; Gail Johnson, Treasurer; Leslie Rubin Secretary; Members-at-large: Verena Borton, Shahla Farahnak, Laleh Rastegarzedeh, Rhonda Reed, Estelle Shiroma, Alexandra Vigil, and Juliana Wells. Rhonda, as one of the longest-running board members, installed each board member by reading an inspirational description of a notable woman who made significant contributions in the fields of art, culture, science, feminism, and human rights. The board looks forward to a productive year.

During the gathering, branch members welcomed Tech Trekkers Logan and Athena, who will be attending Tech Trek camp at UC Davis starting on July 17. A third Tech Trek camper is

June 25 Highlights: AAUW-CA Meet and Greet, Board Installation, and Tech Trek Welcome Continued...

Regina, who was not able to attend the gathering. Logan, Athena, and Regina are rising 8th graders at Harper Junior High School. We also had the pleasure of meeting Logan's mom, Bessie, and Athena's mom, Gina. Logan and Athena were presented with Tech Trek bears, certificates recognizing the girls as Tech Trek finalists, and AAUW swag.



2022-23 Davis Branch Board from left to right: Stephanie, Shahla, Alexandra, Rhonda, Gail, and Estelle. Missing: Verena, Laleh, and Juliana.

July Book Group Recap

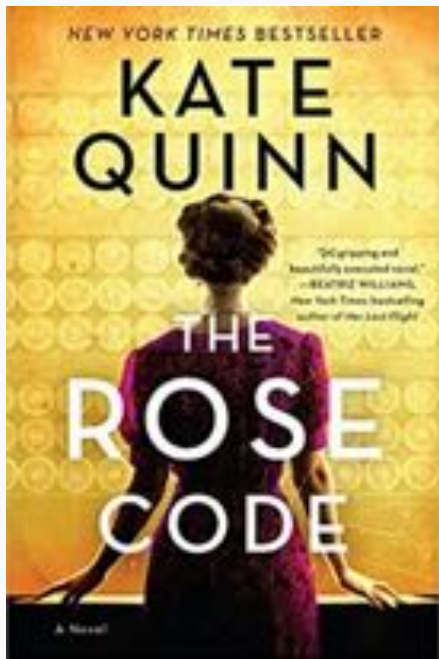
After skipping the June gathering, the Book Group met again on the customary second Saturday, July 11th, when eight enthusiastic members (Estelle, Karen, Verena, Barbara, Cathy, Carolyn, Stephanie and Juliana) spoke about how much they enjoyed reading “The Rose Code: A Novel” by Kate Quinn. All rated it as a great read and highly recommend it. It was a surprise to many that women were so importantly involved in essential services in World War II.

The central characters in the novel are Osla, Mab and Beth who are recruited to work at the real Bletchley Park and sworn to permanent secrecy about their involvement in decoding critical war information. Although they came from

dysfunctional families they became well thought-out characters (fictional as well as based on real people), illustrating true historical facts while entertaining readers with a fascinating combination of spy novel and love stories. Some of the other cryptanalysts were also well-developed characters, the men mostly math whizzes from Cambridge and Oxford, including Alan Turing. Valerie Glassborow became Kate Middleton's grandmother – a real tie-in to today.

Osla had brains, beauty and connections all the way to the royal household through her godfather Lord Mountbatten and as Prince

July Book Group Recap Continued



Philip's girlfriend before the young Princess Elizabeth caught Philip's eye. Back in the 1940s (and still today) women could be vibrant and beautiful without being given credit or respect for their intelligence, management skills and ability to keep secrets. Osla detested being called a "silly deb" and was proud of being part of the war effort. As was Mab who came from a poor background but was determined to advance; she stood up for herself and her tall stature literally was an asset in dealing with the decoding equipment. Beth was browbeaten by her mother, without education and when we first meet her devoid of confidence or self respect. Once she was hired at Bletchley Park based on her unusual ability to solve

puzzles, she blossomed as a code breaker working on the enigma machines and realized her gift for this intricate and exacting work.

The novel took on women's issues: a husband could send his wife to an asylum (or in this case, an adversary sent a woman to an asylum to be rid of her investigative power), divorce was shameful for a woman, as was out of wedlock birth. A man's work was more important than a woman's. However, the coeducational nature and tolerance of diversity of the Bletchley Park workforce was remarkable and ahead of the times. It was pointed out that daughters who have teaching/learning relationships with their fathers often excel in math or science and often can point to one specific incident that propelled them in the STEM direction. We are hoping our Tech Trek program will provide that spark for our girls.

Karen has visited Bletchley Park and added some personal insights. The site has been made into a museum that finally demonstrates the vital contributions made to the war effort couched for so long in total secrecy. There really was a traitor at Bletchley Park supplying information to the Soviet Union during the war; in fact several more were uncovered well after the war.

The next book is "The Night Portrait: A

July Book Group Recap Continued

Novel of World War II and Da Vinci's Italy" by Laura Morelli to be discussed on August 13. Zoom information will be sent by email the week of the meeting. The Woodland branch has invited interested Davis branch readers to join their book group meetings on the first Wednesday of every other month. On September 7 from 2 to 4 pm, the Woodland branch will be discussing "Everything She Touched: Life of Ruth Asawa" by Marilyn Chase.

"If he doesn't love me in a boiler suit, he's not worth dressing up for in the first place."

KATE QUINN

AAUW California News

The new [board of directors](#) and other AAUW leaders met for a Davis weekend retreat themed "Linking together for our mission." Participants worked together to generate ideas on how to advance the action priorities for 2023 which will be revealed in August.

AAUW National News

STEMEd for Girls

For the second summer, AAUW is offering a series of free virtual workshops to inform and inspire teen girls with an interest in pursuing STEM fields. Each STEMEd for Girls session introduces girls to amazing women in STEM and includes hands-on activities, advice and guidance. Although the series has already started, registration is rolling and you can join at any time. The two remaining sessions are:

STEM Topic Exploration Session #6 (Hands-on)

Saturday, July 16 | 2:30-4pm ET

Pathways to STEM Session

Wednesday, July 20 | 6-7:30pm ET

UNA Updates

In commemoration of the signing of the UN Charter in San Francisco on June 26, 1945, the 17th Annual United Nations Charter “We the Peoples” free virtual programs were offered through the Mid Pacific UNA Division June 24-26. Topics discussed included Human Rights Education, Sustainable Development Goals at the Subnational Level, COP27 (Ensuring Egypt Puts Humanity on Path to 1.5C), Peace and Security in Ukraine, The State of Self Determination and Sustainable Development for Indigenous Peoples Around the Planet and a discussion of individual input to ICERD – International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination – based on personal experiences or observations.

Additionally, the San Francisco UNA chapter provided an excellent program on June 26 titled “Keeping Faith With the UN Charter – The Prevention and Removal of Threats to the Peace,” with four prominent presenters. Quoting from the introduction: “On February 27, three days after Russia invaded Ukraine, the Security Council called for an emergency session of the General Assembly. For many, this was the moment the UN stepped firmly back onto the world stage. But was it too late? The Charter’s mission is about keeping hostilities from ever boiling over. What failed?”

After introductory remarks by featured speakers Dulcie Leimbach (editor of PassBlue, a digital publication that daily covers the UN), Roger Lipsey (biographer, art historian and foremost authority on the late UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld), Stephen Schlesinger (author of "Act of creation: the



Founding of the United Nations”), and Thomas Weiss (author of “Would the World be Better Without the UN?” and “What’s Wrong With the United Nations and How to Fix It”), they engaged in a lively discussion about the state of affairs at the United Nations. Hot topics were the Security Council’s veto power that prevents obvious solutions and general criticism of current Secretary General Antonio Gutérres’ lack of transparency and prominence in world affairs. All felt he should speak up more and should have taken action sooner in the Russia-Ukraine situation. Time and again the discussion focused on the strong, ethical leadership of Hammarskjöld that is missing (and badly needed) in today’s world.

Interesting facts from Better World Campaign/UN Foundation: Business contracts with the United Nations generated over \$1.93 billion for U.S. companies in 2020. We invest in the UN to achieve our foreign policy objectives, and in return, we get “a lot of bang for our buck”: the UN makes the U.S. and the world safer, healthier, more peaceful and prosperous and is a really good business partner for our country, since these companies employ thousands of hard-working Americans in 47 states. Revenue to California businesses from contracts with the UN in 2020 was: \$106,939,437.84.

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