

Branches and Twigs

AAUW Redlands Branch
October 2025

www.AAUWRedlands.org
Issue 3, 11 Issues Annually



The Redlands Branch of AAUW is dedicated to advancing equity for women and girls through education, empowerment, and advocacy.

Membership Matters

Our Saturday, October 4th, branch meeting is dedicated to our Redlands branch membership. We'll showcase all the ways we make a positive impact in our community. With committees that advance equity and education for women and girls and interest groups that keep us active and engaged, we are stronger together. If you are interested in becoming more involved, this is the meeting you'll want to attend. You'll discover how to make a direct impact in the Inland Empire, plus make an invigorating impact on your personal life.

Who will you invite to this special branch meeting? Help empower your friends and co-workers: Invite them to join us and see why our AAUW Redland branch is so special! An invitation you can easily distribute is attached to this month's newsletter email. Just forward either the short or long version to your potential guests, then follow-up with a phone call or text to encourage their participation and membership. The more friends you have in AAUW, the more fun you'll have in AAUW!

What does AAUW do?

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is the nation's leading voice promoting gender equity through education and advocacy.

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October Branch Meeting Perspectives on AAUW Membership

The October Branch meeting will focus on the value and joy of belonging to this amazing organization. Members and their guests will be treated to the when and why three of our members joined the Redlands branch and what projects and activities they participated in to keep them coming back year after year. **Lisa Wright** joined in 2022, **Ann Leonard** has been a member for 15 years and **Nelda Stuck** has been an AAUW member for over 50 years. These three amazing ladies are representative of the enthusiasm for AAUW found throughout our membership.



Lisa Wright



Ann Leonard



Nelda Stuck

October Branch Meeting

When:
Saturday, October 4, 2025
8:15 a.m.
Explore Branch Programs, Community Action Projects, Committees, and Interest Groups
9:15 a.m. Branch
10:15 a.m. Program

Where:
University of Redlands
CASA LOMA Room

Menu: Breakfast Buffet:
Orange Cinnamon French Toast*, Syrup*, Scrambled Eggs*&***, Bacon***, Shredded Hash Browns**&****, Fresh Fruit tray**&****, (*vegetarian, **vegan, ***without gluten)

Cost: Members: \$25
Prospective Members' meal is Complimentary

Reservations
Please call 909-362-4955 or email AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org by Sunday, September 21, 2025. After September 21, reservations will be on a space-available basis. **After registering, you will receive a confirmation via email.**

Reminder: A reservation made is a reservation paid.

Members and guests are always welcome at all branch meetings. There is no cost to attend the program. Chairs will be available.

Branch Meetings 2024-2025

Saturday, November 1, 2025
Tuesday, December 2, 2025
Tuesday, January 6, 2026
Saturday, February 7, 2026
Saturday, March 7, 2026
Tuesday, April 7, 2026
Tuesday, May 5, 2026
Saturday, June 6, 2026



Co-Presidents' Corner: Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown

The upcoming branch membership meeting has found each of us taking a look back at our own unique AAUW Redlands "Herstory."

In a few respects, our stories are alike and intertwine.

Both of us were born, raised, and graduated from college in the upper Midwest and, bottom line, fell in love with Southern California guys. Kathryn moved to Northern California in 1971. From Oakland, with an eye toward caring for family elders and retirement. She and her husband, Jim Hendon (a Redlands native), purchased a Redlands rental property in 2004. Meanwhile, in 2009, Amy met Dennis Seaton while he was temporarily working in St Paul, MN. In 2011, when Dennis was transferred back to southern CA, Amy decided to join him and work remotely. Fun fact: they moved into the Brown/Hendon's rental property.

And we became friends.

By the end of 2011, Amy and Dennis had moved to their own Redlands home while Kathryn and Jim were semi-retired and living, as planned, in their former rental property.

After reading about the AAUW Redlands September 2012 branch membership meeting in the Redlands Daily Facts, Kathryn navigated her way solo to the Casa Loma Room, primarily in search of a book club like the one she'd participated in "up North", made up of interesting, intelligent, and friendly women. Of course, at that AAUW membership meeting she found much more on offer, not the least of which were the pleasantly persistent hands of friendship extended by branch leaders Kathy Toister and Kay Dobbertin. Kay promptly enlisted her to manage the branch reservation list, which helped her to gradually learn the names of other members and then put those names to faces at meetings and when she ran into them around town. In the ensuing years, especially after her 2015 retirement, she got to know even more members by joining the planning committees for the STEM Conference and Tech Trek, the Public Policy Committee and CHAT, participating in Great Decisions, California Cuisine and the hiking group, serving as Program VP, co-chairing the Footlighters fundraising event, working on Lunafest and now, FilmFest—all of which opened up a host of other new and rewarding friendships and opportunities to make a positive difference in the lives of women and girls.

In 2013, Amy heard about the AAUW book club and attended a session at Kathryn's home, and shortly thereafter she joined the branch. For many years while working, book club was the only activity in which Amy regularly participated. By 2016 she was regularly contributing cookies to the Footlighters event and in 2018 joined the STEM team as a guide. Also, in 2018 she became a co-chair, along with Kathryn, of the book club. Upon retiring in 2020, Amy joined the STEM planning team, 2023, joined the Fundraising committee and in 2021-23 she was our membership vp.

Over the years, we have both come to not only more fully understand and appreciate the mission of AAUW but to recognize and enjoy our own feeling of empowerment when we see, locally, the tangible differences in the lives of women and girls made by our branch.

Both of us are awed by what AAUW Redlands branch can do and by the many amazing, talented women who are our friends and colleagues.

It is very easy to invite new people to participate in AAUW Redlands because we are inviting them into a truly unique and special group of people with an incredible mission. AAUW Redlands branch advances equity for women and girls through education, empowerment and advocacy. So few words to explain everything we do!

~Amy Bisek

~Kathryn Brown

2024-2025 Board Meeting

All members are invited to attend board meeting in person at Redlands United Church of Christ, 168 Bellevue Ave, or contact Amy Bisek for an online link.

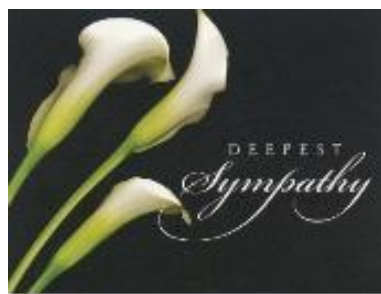
October 13, 2025
November 10, 2025
December 15, 2025
January 12, 2026
February 9, 2026

March 16, 2026
April 13, 2026
May 11, 2026
June 15, 2026

BRUNCH RESERVATION for OCTOBER 4 membership meeting: After September 21st, reservations are made on a space-available basis by calling 909-362-4955 or emailing AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org					AAUW Redlands October 2025	
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 1pm Bridge	2	3	4 8:15am Branch Mtg
5 6pm California Cuisine 1	6	7	8	9	10	11 *9am STEM Committee mtg. **10am Fair for a Change
12	13 *1pm Sew What! **6:30pm Board Mtg	14 8:45am Fundraising	15 *12pm I Am, Therefore I Think **6:00pm CHAT	16 10am Bridge	17	18
19 5:30pm California Cuisine 2 Reservation deadline for Nov 1 branch meeting	20	21	22 *9:30am Bridge Scramble **1pm Bunco	23 1pm & 7pm Book Club	24	25 8:30am Hiking
26	27 *1pm Bridge **1pm Sew What!	28 *8:45am Fundraising **7pm Public Policy	29	30	31	Save the Dates
AAUW Redlands Board Meeting 10/13 6:30pm ON TEAMS ONLY ~Amy Bisek ~Kathryn Brown Bridge Groups 4th Monday 1pm, 1st Wednesday @ 1pm ~Contact Susan Satzger 3rd Thursday @ 10 am Beginners ~Contact Tricia Stubbs Book Club 10/23 <i>The Quiet Damage: QAnon and the Destruction of the American Family</i> by Jesselyn Cook No RSVP required. Information on the facilitator and co-host will be emailed. ~Valarie Boone ~Marianne Baldwin Bunco 10/22 1pm ~Patty Ahearn ~Lori Powell California Cuisine and Conversation I 10/5 6pm ~Kathy Toister California Cuisine and Conversation 2 10/19 5:30pm ~Patty Ahearn CHAT Meeting 10/15 6pm Contemporary Club ~Katherine Gifford 909-798-7565, ext 4138 literacy@akspl.org			<div>NEW DATE</div> <div>November Branch Meeting: Sat, Nov 1 Reservation Deadline: Sun, Oct 19 YMCA Home Tour: Sun, Dec 7 MSJC STEM Conference: Thurs, Jan 8, 2026 Redlands STEM Conference: Wed, Feb 25, 2026 FilmFest: Fri, April 24, 2026</div> Fair for a Change 9/11 10am Casa Loma Room, University of Redlands ~Eileen Sanborn Fundraising Committee 10/14, 10/28 (every other Tuesday) 8:45am on Teams ~Lisa Wright Hiking Our Hills & Mountains 10/25 8:30am Contact Donita to be added to email list ~Donita Remington ~Diana Shimota I Am, Therefore I Think 10/15 "Civil Discourse Anxiety", moderator: Jenna Guzman Lowery Meets 12pm at Trinity Episcopal Church Lounge (Rooms 6-8) 419 South 4th Street, Redlands. ~Barbara Simmons ~Margee Fuller Public Policy 10/28 7pm Contact Cassie to be added to the email list. ~Cassie MacDuff Sew What! 10/13 & 10/27 1pm ~Lisa McCarty			
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Member News – Condolences



In sympathy and friendship, we send our condolences to Hester Turpin on the loss of her husband and to Kay Dobbartin on the loss of her brother.

STEM Initiatives

Mt. San Jacinto STEM Conference: January 8, 2026

Redlands STEM Conference: February 25, 2026

Redlands STEM Conferences planning meeting

10/11 9am

~Pam Ford

~Karen Watkins

Mt. San Jacinto STEM Conference

~Pam Ford

~Betsy Grimes

Tech Trek Committee

~Donita Remington

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Membership Matters

~continued from page 1

What does AAUW do?

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is the nation's leading voice promoting gender equity through education and advocacy.

Why Join? AAUW: Empowering Women Since 1881

AAUW membership connects a powerful network of more than 170,000 people across the country who are passionate about building a fairer future. We make a difference!



Membership Matters: Saturday, October 4th Branch Meeting

This year's meeting will be shorter. We won't have an announcement from the stage of each group, rather you and your guests can visit each table to hear about their purpose and ask questions. Prospective members receive a complimentary brunch and a reduced price on their first year's dues if they join that day.

If you want to send a prospective member but can't attend yourself, let us know at AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org or call 909-362-4955 and we'll ask another member to host your guest that morning. And make sure you register your guest, so we have a brunch seat and name tag ready. The RSVP date is Sunday, September 21. After September 21, reservations will be on a space-available basis.

Welcome to the AAUW Community!

Membership in AAUW is open to any graduate holding an associate degree (or equivalent), a bachelor's degree, or a higher degree from an accredited institution. AAUW members pay dues annually at three levels: national \$74, state \$30 and branch \$31 = \$135 annual dues. If a new member joins at this meeting, their first year's dues are reduced to \$98.

You'll Want to Make Reservations

Reservations for you and your guests should be made at AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org or 909-362-4955 by Sunday, September 21, 2024. After September 21, reservations will be on a space-available basis.

For More Information

Do your potential guests want to know more? More information about AAUW can be found at aauw.org. More information about AAUW Redlands can be found at www.AAUWRedlands.org. Questions can be directed to Membership@AAUWRedlands.org or by calling Jan Negron.



Volunteers needed for Membership Meeting - October 4.

From event planning to hosting potential new members, a variety of roles are awaiting your assistance. Please contact Jan Negron if you'd like to help.

Many Happy Returns To Our October Birthday Ladies!



Kathy Albrektson
Luann Bangsund
Susan Bentley
Valarie Boone
Sharon Collins
Ellen Cope
Amber Costa
Denise Davis
Varonica Dixon
Aaliyah Hearsley
Sunny Hyon
Keller Iuppenlatz
Joyce Katkov

Diane Landeros
Peggy Lanum
Charlotte Lucey
Jennifer Maravillas
Veronica Phillips
Tricia Rogers
Deborah Seibly
Diane Shimota
Karen Skoog
Patricia Stubbs
Erica Wilson
Lisa Wright

Welcome new members

We are excited to announce the following new Redlands branch members. Please welcome them to our branch.

Esly Benitez Student Associate member
University of Redlands, 2029

Brooklyn Briggs Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2029

Megan Brown Student Associate
Crafton Hills College, 2027

Megan lives in Banning and is excited for the upcoming years at Crafton Hills College. She loves anime, cosplay, and games. Megan will happily talk about any of them for a long time. She wants to join AAUW to get to meet like-minded women!

Caroleen Cosand Wayne State University, BS
University of Redlands, MS

Caroleen is originally from Michigan where she attended Michigan State University and graduated from Wayne State University with a degree in Special Education. After teaching in special education and elementary education for 25 years, she became a school administrator in 1998 and retired in 2011. Caroleen and her husband have lived in Redlands since 1979, and she is presently on the Redlands Symphony Orchestra Board chairing the Education and community Outreach Committee. She likes to read, bake, travel, and complete small home improvement projects.

Emberly De La Vega Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2029
Emberly loves to read and swim.

Welcome new members



Emma George Student Associate
Crafton Hills College, 2026

Emma has lived in Redlands her whole life. She is an honors student in psychology at Crafton Hills college. Emma loves meeting new people, working with kids, and arts. She is interested in AAUW because she wants to have a voice for women and participate in, and uplifting, her community.

Aaliyah Hearsley Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2029

Ariana Herrera Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2028

Kasey Horn Student Associate member
CSU San Bernardino

Kasey graduated with an art degree in Studio Arts and is now studying Visual Arts.

Lillian Isch Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2029

Amy Meneses Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2029

Vanessa Perez Student Associate
Crafton Hills College, 2027

Vanessa is a Redlands native and graduated in June from Redlands High School. She played soccer during elementary and middle school and now loves watching games on TV with her dad. Vanessa also loves reading, drawing, playing video games and hanging out with her friends. She is looking forward to having the opportunity to travel. She is interested in AAUW because she is an advocate for women's rights and wants to be part of something that helps other women and where she can meet new people.

Abigail Simmons Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2029

Abigail is interested in becoming a forensic pathologist. Some of her hobbies include reading, rollerblading, and sewing.

Kobi Stanley Student Associate
University of Redlands, 2026

Charleen Walsh University of St. Francis, BA
University of Illinois, MA

Heidi Wilson Pomona College, BA
University of Arizona, MA

Nancy Yowell Memorial Scholarship (NYMS): 2025–2026 Application Opens October 1st

We are excited to announce updates to the NYMS program and that the new application will be available on our [website](#) on October 1st.

This scholarship is truly a **hidden gem** for women of any age who have returned to college to finish their Associate or Bachelor's degree after a break in their studies. We've made several changes, but the main highlights to note are:

- **We've expanded eligibility.** Now, eligible applicants can either be attending a AAUW Redlands Partner School (Crafton Hills College, San Bernardino Valley College, University of Redlands) **OR** living in a AAUW Redlands branch city (including, but not limited to: Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Cherry Valley, Colton, Grand Terrace, Highland, Loma Linda, Mentone, Redlands, San Bernardino, and Yucaipa).
- **We've increased the award amount.** For recipients enrolled in 4-year schools, the award amount has been increased from \$2,000 to \$2,500. For recipients enrolled in 2-year schools, the award amount remains \$1,000, with the goal of awarding at least two.
- **We're acknowledging our partner schools.** We're reserving at least one scholarship for a qualified applicant at one of our partner schools.
- **We have an easier application process.** We've replaced the fillable PDF with an online form applicants can use to submit their application and essay (shout-out to member **Kim Cousins** for this!) Applicants will continue to email in their recommendation letters and transcripts.

This year's NYMS team:

- Program Management, Marketing - **Keita Wangari**
- College Communication - **Judy Cannon, Pam Ford, and Sharon Collins**
- Fundraising - **Tricia Stubbs and Eileen Sanborn**
- Applicant Management & Communications - **Rachel Lee and Margaret Wilcox**

Please use the attached flyer (after October 1st!) to help spread the word. Also, please follow our AAUW Redlands branch page on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#). When you see us posting about the scholarship, please re-share with your followers. And, of course, we can always use help evaluating applications in February – contact me if you want to participate.

~Keita Wangari
NYMS Chair

Holiday Boutique, Saturday, November 1st to Support NYM Scholarships



What can you do to help the Nancy Yowell Memorial Scholarship sale? NYM Scholarships are available to help local women who have returned to college after an interruption in their education.

At the November 1st branch meeting the boutique will open at 8:15 am sharp. If you are bringing items to sell, please arrive before 8 am.

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AAUW
Redlands Branch

2025-26
**NANCY YOWELL
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE
RETURNED TO COLLEGE AFTER AN
INTERRUPTION

\$1,000 | **\$2,500**
for 2-year schools | for 4-year schools

QUALIFICATIONS

- ✓ Women enrolled in Associate or Bachelor's program
- ✓ Previous college experience that was interrupted
- ✓ Attends a Redlands AAUW Partner School (Crafton Hills College, San Bernardino Valley College, Univ. of Redlands) OR lives in a Redlands AAUW Branch city (a few examples: Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Cherry Valley, Colton, Grand Terrace, Highland, Loma Linda, Mentone, Redlands, San Bernardino, Yucaipa)

Application Deadline:
JAN. 31, 2026

CONTACT INFO:
nysms@aauwredlands.org
<https://bit.ly/4gRiCH0>

Holiday Boutique ~continued from page 6

- Bring baked goods neatly wrapped. These sell out and are always a big hit.
- Bring in 2nd-hand jewelry or get it to Eileen Sanborn beforehand. This table is the most popular. Even Casa Loma staff comes out to buy.
- If you have more expensive jewelry or something more valuable, let Tricia Stubbs know, patriciastubbs@yahoo.com. We will use it in a silent auction.
- Bring in a decorated wreath, gift baskets with wine, deli items, kitchen items, anything you can donate.
- Bring handcrafted items for the holidays--knitted, crocheted, or sewed. One member is making teddy bears. These are always popular, and our member talent is amazing.
- This is new. We're excited. Bring in a new, unused, in-the box item that you might have been given as a regift but don't want or need. We'll take it off your hands and put it to good use.



The sky is the limit. Contact Tricia Stubbs, if you have questions or ideas. Bring items for the sale to the October meeting, if possible, or the November meeting before 8:00 a.m. Sale starts at 8:15 a.m. on November 1st.

~Tricia Stubbs

AAUW at Fair for a Change

AAUW Community Engagement



Looking to make a difference in Redlands? *Fair for a Change* is your chance to connect face-to-face with us and dozens of local nonprofits, service clubs, and foundations. Whether you're a professional ready to give back, or simply curious about community opportunities, this free event is for you. Join us on **Saturday, October 11, 2025, from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM at the University of Redlands, Casa Loma Room**, to find your perfect way to get involved. [More details here!](#)

If you'd like to volunteer to help staff our AAUW Redlands information table at the event, please contact Eileen Sanborn. It'll be a great way to meet community members who want to make a tangible difference in the lives of women and girls.

2025-26 Branch Officers:

Co-Presidents: Amy Bisek & Kathryn Brown, **President-Elect:** Susan Bangasser, **Communication Vice President:** Marianne Baldwin, **Hospitality Vice President:** Susan Miller, **Program Vice President:** Ellen Gruenbaum, **Membership Vice President:** Jan Negron, **Secretary:** Nan Neighbours, **Treasurer:** Ginny Evans-Perry. **At-Large Board Members:** Kim Cousins, Thelma Muro, Margaret Wilcox

B&T Submission:

The deadline for the November newsletter is October 10th. Send your articles to the editor via email to news@aauwredlands.org

AAUW Community Engagement

YMCA Holiday Home Tour 2025 Volunteers Needed



For the past 20 years, AAUW has proudly supported the YMCA's annual Holiday Home Tour by hosting one of the featured homes. This year's Holiday Home Tour will take place on Sunday, December 7, 2025, and we are looking for volunteers to serve as hostesses in the home assigned to AAUW. There are two available shifts 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 12:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. This event is a major fundraiser for the YMCA, with proceeds benefiting their Legal Aid Program. Legal Aid Program Director, Sara Pugh, and her team provide legal services to low-income clients, primarily women. Volunteering is a meaningful way to support this important cause—and it's a lot of fun too! A sign-up sheet will be available at the October meeting. If you prefer, you can also email or text your name, phone number, and preferred shift to Linda Browning or Ann Leonard. We hope you'll join us in giving your time and energy to this wonderful tradition! Thank you!

*~Ann Leonard and Linda Browning
Home Tour Co-Chairs*



YMCA Holiday Pantry Bakeshop

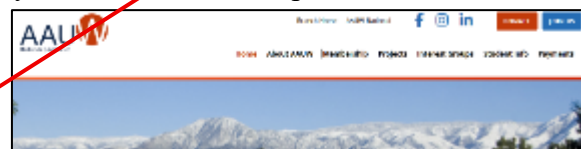


Another way AAUW members can support the YMCA's Legal Aid Program is by baking goodies for the YMCA Pantry. Watch for more details in the November newsletter!

Reminder: Online Membership Directory Password

This is a reminder that our AAUW Redlands branch website has an online member directory. It lists all members' contact information, joining year, annual membership renewal date and educational background. You can access our website at www.AAUWRedlands.org. The password for the online directory portion of the website is listed in our yearbook (page 3). No longer do you need to hunt down your little yellow yearbook when you need someone's phone number. You can just go online and you'll find the most up to date information.

STEP 1



STEP 2

STEP 3 password



Redlands Branch STEM Initiatives



Our AAUW Redlands Tech Trek Committee is ready to start TECH TREK 2026 and WE NEED NEW MEMBERS! Join us during October Membership Month.

Are you interested in joining our Tech Trek Committee? This is your opportunity! Tech Trek 2026 will begin soon! The Redlands Branch Tech Trek is part of the AAUW CA Tech Trek Program. Tech Trek is a one-week summer camp for middle school girls focusing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Campers either attend virtually online or attend in person on a university campus. Tech Trek is an invaluable and rewarding experience for the girls and for our committee members.

~continued on page 9

Tech Trek *~continued from page 8*

Later this year, our committee members will meet with middle school Counselors at Nicolet (Banning), San Geronio (Beaumont), Clement (Redlands) and Park View (Yucaipa) to share information about Tech Trek, and to deliver certificates of achievement to the girls who participated in



Trek Tech 2025. Science teachers at the schools will nominate 7th grade girls whom they believe would benefit from participating in Tech Trek camp, who have displayed an interest in and an eagerness to learn more about STEM subjects. The nominated girls will be invited to complete an online application (consisting of an essay and a questionnaire) and our committee members will work with school personnel to encourage the girls and their families to finalize their applications by the Tech Trek camp deadline.

Our committee will meet to score each applicant on the quality of their essay, individual interest in or experience with STEM, participation in group activities, and interest in learning new things. Last year the essays were inspiring! Applicants will be interviewed by members of our committee. Each girl will be scored on her interest and enthusiasm to learn about or pursue a potential career in STEM, openness to being away from home at camp (without access to their cell phone), and their ability to work well with others and take on new challenges. The girls will also be asked about their preference for virtual or in-person camp. Meeting the girls, listening to their answers, and seeing their enthusiasm is an amazing experience!

Due to the generosity of our donors, we were able to offer twelve girls the opportunity to participate in either virtual or residential camp last year. The selected campers, their families, and our committee members are invited to attend a celebratory pizza party in May where the campers and their parents have the opportunity to meet with Tech Trek alumnae, receive their ESRI-provided backpacks (including an AAUW Tech Trek teddy bear), and ask questions about the camping experience.

I invite you to become involved in this amazing experience. We are looking for additional committee members. If you are interested in joining our Tech Trek Committee this year, please contact Donita Remington or sign up at our October Membership Meeting.

~Donita Remington

AAUW Redlands STEM Conferences Update: Progress is Happening!

NEW DATE for Redlands Conference: Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Here we go! Our branch will carry out our two STEM conferences for 8th grade girls for the 33rd year! The conference for Banning, Hemet and two Yucaipa charter schools will be held at Mt San Jacinto College's San Jacinto Campus on Thursday, January 8, 2026.

The conference for Beaumont, Redlands and Yucaipa-Calimesa schools will be held at the University of Redlands on Wednesday, February 25. Please note that this is a different date than originally published in your new yellow yearbook. (It's complicated!)

These conferences expose our students to a wide range of jobs and careers in STEM fields, as well as immerse them in experiences with strong female professionals in STEM. Our goal is that they feel connected enough and confident enough that they will stick with their math and science classes in high school to be prepared for college coursework and new opportunities.

Gloria Blackwell, CEO of AAUW, recently stated, "if we are serious about securing America's place as a global leader in innovation, we should be doubling down on investing in women in STEM..." ([click here to read the article](#)) That is what our branch does!

Put the conference dates on your calendar so you are ready to say "YES" when someone from the STEM Initiatives Committee asks if you can help. Or better yet, just call us and offer to help!

~Pam Ford, Betsy Grimes, and Karen Watkins

Redlands Branch STEM Conferences Co-Chairs



AAUW Redlands Archives...

CHAT (Conversation Helps Adults Transition) Begins:



In 2013, Adult Literacy Volunteer Coordinators Katherine Gifford and Trudy Waldron noticed how many adults who had immigrated from across the world to our area were asking for adult literacy assistance because they needed help with their conversational English. While very well educated in their home countries, these adults needed to gain new confidence to get jobs and advance their U.S. education. Many had already completed or were too advanced for the English as a Second Language Program offered by the Redlands Adult School.

The volunteer tutors with the Redlands Adult Literacy Program at A.K. Smiley Public Library are trained to assist adult learners -- many without even a high school degree -- to develop reading and writing, not to be English conversational partners. Seeking volunteer support, Katherine and Trudy approached the then-AAUW president, Kathy Toister, who was immediately receptive to forming a program called CHAT (Conversation Helps Adults Transition.) Volunteer CHAT partners (CHATors) would be drawn from AAUW membership to help well-educated women wanting to improve their conversational English (CHATEes).

How It Works:

Immigrants seeking help with English meet with Diane Shimota, the adult literacy coordinator at Smiley Library. When Diane identifies a person who is well-educated and has strong language skills, she refers them to CHAT. Trudy and Katherine continue to meet with these candidates to find out about their interests and explain the CHAT program. Then they call on AAUW volunteers to see if they are willing to meet with a CHAT partner at their convenience to help them gain conversational skills. The few men who have been referred to CHAT usually meet separately, though on occasion they have met with the larger CHAT group.



A typical monthly meeting begins with an icebreaker, and then the day's topic is introduced. Trudy leads everyone through a list of common idioms related to that topic, promoting a lively discussion of those words and other expressions that can be difficult. Any AAUW member can attend the monthly meetings; you don't have to already have a CHATEe!



CHATEes have assisted at STEM conferences, visited museums, written a cookbook, and participated in a writing class. Most importantly, CHAT has been a great way for all members to learn about other cultures and develop deep friendships. Over 15 countries have had members in CHAT. Some CHATEes have been in the program for more than 10 years, others have moved back to their home countries but still stay in touch. Since 2013, the CHAT program has helped over 120 people.

Volunteers:

Without AAUW volunteers, the CHAT program would not exist. It is critically important to the CHATEes that they have the opportunity to speak with and get feedback from someone they trust. With this in mind, we would like to thank the following AAUW members who are *CHAT* volunteers:

Del Barrett, Sheron Bealer, Shelley Bodnar, Kathryn Brown, Carol Buchanan, Ellen Cope, Amber Costa, Cheri Dawes, Kay Dobberty, Paula Ferri-Milligan, Katherine Gifford, Kim Green, Yvette Guidry, Sherri Kinsey, Alice Mozley, Dorothy Nordquist, Evelyn O'Prey, Eileen Sanborn, Diane Shimota, Barbara Simmons, Christine Smith, Carol Sousa, Meena Spangrud, Carolee Taylor, Trudy Waldron, Jane Weldon, and Pat Zappia.

Thank you to Katherine Gifford who provided the text for this article!

HERstory - Jane Roberts



One Woman, 34 Million Friends: The Life and Legacy of Jane Roberts

Jane Roberts is proof that one kind, strong, and determined woman can make a real difference. The co-founder of *34 Million Friends of the Women of the World* and a 2005 Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Jane has spent her life turning privilege into purpose and outrage into action.

Born in 1941 in San Diego, Jane grew up in a household immersed in learning. Her father was a professor of English at San Diego State University, her mother a science and math teacher. “We were privileged,” Jane recalls, “and with that came a sense of responsibility.”

She was shy as a child but found her confidence on the tennis court. Family friend Billie Jean King left a lasting impression. Jane admired her lifelong fight for women’s equality in sports.

A Life in Languages and Love

Her passion for French started early, in High School. It only grew when her family spent a year in France during her father’s sabbatical. She went on to earn a degree in French at San Diego State, then an M.A. in Paris, where she wrote her thesis on philosopher Blaise Pascal. Her waltz with religious belief began early.

In 1964, Jane joined the University of Redlands as a French instructor. There, she met Julian “Jay” Roberts, a chemistry professor. It was love at first sight, her youthful smile tells us, remembering the poems they once exchanged. The couple married within a year and built a family that included their son Jeff, adopted in 1974, and daughter Annie, born two years later.

From Teacher to Activist

Jane balanced part-time teaching with raising her children and a growing political voice. She attended the first March for Women’s Lives in the late 1970s and later returned to teaching full-time at Eisenhower High School in Rialto, where she saw firsthand how teenage motherhood disrupted students’ lives.

By the time she and Jay retired in 1998, Jane had shifted her focus from domestic battles over reproductive rights to global issues of population and women’s health. She taught one of the first feminist courses at the University of Redlands, served as president of the Redlands Democratic Club, and became a public policy chair with AAUW Redlands. “These ideas of having the world get serious about its women and girls had been maturing for over 35 years,” she says.

Outrage at 3 a.m.

The turning point came in 2002. When the George W. Bush administration blocked \$34 million in congressionally approved funding to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Jane could not sleep. At 3 a.m., an idea struck: *What if 34 million Americans gave just one dollar each?*

Her letter to the editor of the *San Bernardino Sun* made a simple plea: “As an exercise in outraged democracy, would 34 million of my fellow citizens please join me by sending one dollar each to the U.S. Committee for UNFPA?”

She mailed her own check — and a single dollar bill — to start the effort. Partnering with New Mexico attorney Lois Abraham, Jane launched *34 Million Friends*. Soon, envelopes flooded UNFPA’s offices. Staff gave up lunch hours to process donations, until staff was assigned to support the effort. Within a year, the campaign had raised \$1 million.

By 2020, *34 Million Friends* had raised more than **\$7.8 million**, money that helped fund maternal care in Africa, prevent unwanted pregnancies, and save lives. A hospital in Mali even built a new operating room to treat obstetric fistula patients, funded by Jane and Lois’ grassroots movement.

A Nobel Nomination and a Lasting Voice

In 2005, UNESCO nominated Jane among “1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize,” recognizing women whose nonviolent work often goes unnoticed. She published a book to spread her message further, traveled to at least 18 states and five countries, and became a sought-after speaker at universities and conferences.

Jane Roberts ~continued from page 11

A Nobel Nomination and a Lasting Voice

Quotes that have inspired her include:

- “When the world takes care of women, women take care of the world.”
- “Feminism is wonderful. It is simply the belief that men and women are human beings together.”

Even now, Jane writes sharp, satirical essays with titles like “*God and Men Behaving Badly*” and “*Atheism: The Last Closet*.”

Privilege, Responsibility, and Legacy

Now nearly 84, Jane lives in Redlands in a retirement community, still active in her book club and email circle of friends. She lost Jay in 2019 but finds joy in her daughter Annie’s daily calls, in making breakfast, conversations with friends that drop by, reading good books and in the poems, she wrote decades ago on her way home from Africa. Phrases in her favorite poem bring tears to her eyes and weaken her voice.

She defines her legacy in three words: **Dedication, Education, and Privilege**. Not privilege as guilt, but as responsibility. “Go for it,” she advises younger women. “Don’t get sidetracked. Don’t worry about failing. If you worry about failing, you’re never going to do anything.”

From a restless night in Redlands to saving lives across the globe, Jane Roberts has shown what one person’s outrage — and courage — can achieve. She may call herself simply “privileged,” but history will remember her as a friend to millions.

Thank you, Jane, for “Advancing equity for women and girls through education, empowerment and advocacy.”

~Thelma Muro

September Branch Meeting

September Birthdays

Eirka Paddock, Susan Shodahl,
Cassie MacDuff, Peggy Crabtree,
Heather King, Joyce Heitmeier,
Linda Browning, Martha Lehman,
Sherry Walsh, Marion Golson,
and Kathy Warren

September 9, 2025 Branch Meeting Re-Cap

AAUW Redlands experienced a fun gathering after our summer break, with about 104 members

and guests in attendance. Many people were thanked for summer activities including a very successful Back2School Jam, Ushering at the Redlands Bowl, Juneteenth participation, and Tech Trek success. New opportunities were presented via Leadership Redlands, training in financial literacy of the branch finances, participation in the Fair for Change, Bridge Scramble in October, and openings for new branch leadership. Reminders were made of the upcoming October Membership meeting, the November Holiday Boutique, and the December YMCA Holiday Home Tour. Plus, the newly updated Yearbook was distributed. Thank you to the greeters, introductions of guests, new members, and birthday celebrations were offered. After the dinner two student members who attended NCCWSL gave a delightful summary of their experience and envelopes were on the table to provide for future NCCWSL opportunities. Architect Thelma Muro was introduced and presented a wonderful view into her own worldwide business of designing and creating theme parks. She showed photos, videos, phases of design, and shared her delights, and her challenges in her rarely experienced niche of work. The most recent branch minutes and financial reports were accepted by the members, and the next meetings were announced. The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m. ~ Nan Neighbours/ Secretary (Please see attached minutes for details).



**Pam Ford C/U
partnership co-chair**



**Redlands' 2025 NCCWSL students:
Alison Klemm and Sierra Mason**



September Speaker

Theme park designer, Thelma Muro, *"Worlds Within Worlds: The Magic of Immersive Theme Park Design"*



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Branches and Twigs
Issue 3 October 2025



...See you Saturday, November 1st
for our Holiday Boutique
in Support of NYM
Scholarships



Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko, Co-chairs,
AAUW California Public Policy Committee
publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org
Please click [HERE](#) for the September issue
of Public Policy News.

This issue includes action items and articles which are dedicated to the fight for public education as central in the fight to preserve our pluralistic democracy. Included are: "Understand the Urgency of Branch Participation in the School Board Project" and "Anti-LGBTQ+ Supreme Court Decision Will Likely Impact K-12 Education in California."