

Branches and Twigs

AAUW Redlands Branch
February 2026

www.AAUWRedlands.org
Issue 7, 11 Issues Annually



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

Co-President's Corner: STEM Conference Season is Here! Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown



The January 8th STEM conference at Mt. San Jacinto College is a wrap and the February 25th STEM conference at the University of Redlands is just a month away.

One of the downsides of serving as co-presidents this year is that we have had to step back from our recent years of STEM Committee participation to become observers as we watch this year's STEM Conference Committee (very competently) forge ahead without us.

AAUW Redlands developed its STEM Conference in the mid-1990s as a result of two significant events: (1) The 1992 AAUW study, "Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America", showed that although boys and girls started out equal in our national education system, girls wound up behind in most areas by high school, especially in the areas

~continued on page 4

**Redlands
STEM
Conference
Committee
requests
your help
stuffing
student
letters after
the February
branch
meeting.**

February Branch Meeting: "Role of an Elected School Board Member 101"



Dr. Gwendolyn Dowdy-Rodgers will speak on the "Role of an Elected School Board Member 101" at the AAUW Redlands branch meeting on February 7, 2026. She is a dynamic and respected leader, currently serving as President of the San Bernardino County Board of Education and President and CEO of the Arrowhead United Way. Previously, she completed two terms as a board member for San Bernardino City Unified School District and continues to spend countless hours working in the community, serving on boards, and is also a commissioner for San Bernardino First 5 Children and Families Commission.

In 2023, she was profiled on PBS SoCal, where she talked about the importance of citizens getting involved in government meetings. Similarly, Dr. Rodgers will discuss public participation in school board meetings, active involvement during public comments, and how to contribute to policy discussions at the meeting. She said, "Whether it's advocacy or policy making at the school board meeting, the focus should always be on students."

~continued on page 3

February Branch Meeting

When

Saturday February 7, 2026
Social 8:45 am
Brunch 9:30 am
Program 10:15 am

Where

University of Redlands
CASA LOMA Room

Menu

Buffet: Avocado Toast
Multigrain Toast*, Arugula**&***,
Mashed Avocado **&***,
Crushed Red Pepper**&***,
Tomato Slices**&***, Chopped
Bacon **, Fresh Seasonal
Fruit**&***,
*Vegetarian, **Vegan, ***Made
without Gluten

Cost

Members and guests: \$25
Members and Members'
Guests: Beverage only, No
Food is \$8
Student Associate Members:
\$15

Reservations:

Please call 909-362-4955 or
email
AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org
by Sunday, January 25, 2026. After January 25,
reservations will be made 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 2025-2026

Saturday, March 7, 2026*
*RSVP deadline 2/22/2026
Tuesday, April 7, 2026
Tuesday, May 5, 2026
Saturday, June 6, 2026

BRUNCH RESERVATION for FEBRUARY 7 meeting: After January 25, reservations are made on a space-available basis by calling 909-362-4955 or emailing AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org						AAUW Redlands February 2026		
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat		
1 6pm California Cuisine 1	2	3 8:45am Fundraising	4 1pm Bridge	5	6	8:45am Branch Mtg	7	
						After Branch Meeting STEM Conference Campus Walking Tour		
8	9 *1pm Sew What! **6:30pm Board Mtg.	10	11 6pm CHAT	12	13	14 9am STEM Packet Day		
15 5:30pm California Cuisine 2	16 1pm Bunko 	17 8:45am Fundraising	18 12pm I Am, Therefore I Think	19 *10am Bridge 3pm STEM Conf Campus Walking Tour **6pm DEI/ Racial Justice	20	21 9 am STEM Redlands Mtg		
22 Reservation Deadline for March 7 branch mtg.	23 *1pm Bridge **1pm Sew What!	24 7pm Public Policy	25 1pm Bunko U of R STEM Conference	26 *1pm & 7pm Reading & the Rainbow	27	28 9am Hiking		
Save the Dates								
March Branch Meeting Sat, March 7 <i>Reservation deadline Saturday February 22</i> Great Decisions starts the week of March 2 for 8 weeks <i>Monday afternoons or Wednesday evenings</i> Breakaway Femmes film Sun, March 8 Redlands Community Day of Service Sat, March 14 Lobby Days Training Mon, March 23 Bridge Scramble Thurs, March 26 Lobby Days March 27-April 17 Adult Literacy Program Fri, April 17 AAUW California Annual Event Sat, April 18 FilmFest Fri, April 24 & Sun, April 26				Bunco 2/16, 2/25 1pm ~Patty Ahearn ~Lori Powell California Cuisine and Conversation 1 2/1 6pm ~Kathy Toister California Cuisine and Conversation 2 2/15 5:30pm ~Patty Ahearn CHAT Meeting 2/11 6pm Assembly Room, AK Smiley public library ~Katherine Gifford 909-798-7565, ext. 4138 literacy@akspl.org Diversity, Equity & Inclusion / Racial Justice 2/19 6pm DEI / Racial Justice. Location will be sent by email. ~Ellen Gruenbaum ~Erica Wilson ~Donita Remington Fundraising Committee 2/3 & 2/17 (every other Tuesday) 8:45am on Teams ~Lisa Wright Hiking Our Hills & Mountains 2/28 9am Contact Alison or Donita to be added to email list ~Donita Remington ~Diana Shimota				
AAUW Redlands Board Meeting 2/9 6:30 pm Redlands United Church of Christ and remotely on teams. Contact Amy for link. ~Amy Bisek ~Kathryn Brown Book Club 2/26 <i>Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen</i> No RSVP required. Information on the facilitator and co-host will be emailed. ~Valarie Boone ~Marianne Baldwin Bridge Groups 4th Monday @ 1pm, 1st Wednesday @ 1pm ~Contact Susan Satzger 3rd Thursday @ 10 am ~Contact Tricia Stubbs				<i>calendar continued on page 3</i>				

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Dr. Gwendolyn Dowdy-Rodgers

She is a wife, mother, and lifetime resident of San Bernardino. She holds a bachelor's degree in Behavioral Health, a master's degree in Human Resource Management, and a doctorate in Educational Leadership. She spent over 20 years in finance management, followed by 14 years as a Foster Youth Mental Health Community Development Specialist, before joining Arrowhead United Way.

Almost two decades ago, she created the Young Women's Empowerment Foundation (YWE), a social, emotional, and academic enrichment program where the mission is to empower young women 12-21 to reach their highest aspirations. To date, YWE has mentored four thousand plus young women and provided scholarships.

Dr. Rodgers is a champion of the people and fights every day to make sure there is equity for all students, parents, staff, and community. She continues to work on educational issues to close the equity gap while providing advocacy to ensure all school sites have wellness centers to address the social, emotional, and mental health needs of everyone.

~Eileen Sanborn, coordinator



Hospitality Birthday Club

This month we will celebrate our February birthdays

February Birthdays:

Marianne Baldwin

Linda Bidaki

Marcella Cavallaro

Cara Chavez

Rosemary Conway

Kay Dobbertin

Judy Elder

Kaye Espinosa

Ginny Evans-Perry

Andrea Fuqua

Kasey Horn

Tracy Massimiano

Lisa McCarty

Laura Miller

Andrea Morics

Nan Neighbours

Krista Newkirk

Amanda Otter

Vanessa Perez

Renae Reiswig

Christine Smith

Nelda Stuck

Karen Watkins

I Am, Therefore I Think

2/18 "Finding Joy in a Changing World", facilitator: Valarie Boone
Meets 12 pm at Trinity Episcopal Church Lounge (Rooms 6-8)
419 South 4th Street, Redlands.

~Barbara Simmons

~Margee Fuller

Lobby Days >> see article on page 8

Public Policy

2/24 7pm ~Cassie MacDuff

Sew What!

2/9 & 2/23 1pm

~Lisa McCarty

STEM Initiatives

STEM Conference @ Univ of Redlands: February 25, 2026

STEM Committee planning meeting

2/21 9am at 216 E. South Ave, Redlands

~Pam Ford

~Karen Watkins

STEM Packet assembly

2/14 9am 1251 E Lugonia Ave., Redlands

STEM Conference Campus Walking Tour

2/7 after branch meeting in Casa Loma

2/19 3pm, meet in front of Casa Loma room

Tech Trek Committee

~Donita Remington



The 2026 AAUW Art Contest

Hello AAUW Redlands "artist" members!

The 2026 AAUW Annual Art Contest is **open through January 30, 2026.** [AAUW Art Contest page](#)

Women artists remain underrepresented in galleries and often face pay inequity. Our annual contest spotlights the creativity and contributions of women artists within our community, advancing gender equity through art.

Co-President's Corner: Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown

of math, science and sports; and (2) In April 1993, a group of AAUW Redlands members attended a conference put on by the Palm Springs branch of AAUW, which focused on gender roles in the classroom. Inspired by these events, AAUW Redlands soon came up with a plan of action and the AAUW Redlands Math-Science Conference for 8th Grade Girls (now re-named The AAUW STEM Conference for 8th Grade Girls) came to be. 2026 will mark our 32nd conference year.

Every year, post-conference evaluations received from attending students, school staff, and volunteers alike consistently report a high level of conference satisfaction. Year after year, AAUW Redlands members encounter local residents who recount their own (or their daughter's or granddaughter's) positive conference experiences.

In 2017, while preparing to celebrate our 2018 25th conference anniversary, a few of us remarked (only partly in jest) that we were “looking forward to the day when we could cancel the conference” because girls were no longer lagging behind boys in their math classes.

The Associated Press has recently analyzed data from the Stanford Education Data Archive and found that in the decade before the pandemic struck, girls had overtaken boys’ scores in math and finally closed the long-standing gender gap in that gateway subject. Then the pandemic struck, and math scores dipped across the board in its wake, but girls’ scores dropped far more precipitously and have continued to remain lower than boys’.

Similar results hold true in California. Girls had higher math scores in 62% of California districts in 2018-19, but only 4% in 2023-24. Locally, RUSD and YCJUSD math scores for 8th graders echoed that trend: for the first time, in 2015, RUSD 8th grade girls tested equal to the boys in math performance, and that year, YCJUSD girls surpassed the boys by an impressive 9 point margin! The RUSD girls continued to increase their test scores faster and had progressed beyond the boys by 7 points as of 2018-19; in YCJUSD, by 2018-19, the girls were still ahead of the boys by 3 points. And then what happened after the pandemic?

Studies have indicated that girls reported higher levels of anxiety and depression during the pandemic, plus more caretaking burdens than boys, but there isn’t much data to explain why the math gender gap reopened, and math experts worry that we won’t ever know. The current administration has slashed education research programs, and federal funds for professional development have also dried up, which will make it harder to address any achievement gaps.

While standardized math testing does not begin to tell the entire story, it is an important and easily available measure of progress over time. We’re hopeful that the gender differences in math testing performance will soon (again!) disappear. Meanwhile, we at AAUW Redlands have observed over the years that our STEM conference benefits go well beyond impacting academic achievement to also enhance students' self-esteem, mutual respect, motivation, and an awareness of how essential STEM knowledge is for 21st century career advancement. Our conferences also provide an important opportunity for our members and other volunteers to experience the joy and camaraderie of working together for the benefit of our community.

We’ll see you at the conference on February 25!

Kathryn & Amy



AAUW Member Businesses

The board is exploring ways to support businesses that are owned or run by members of our branch. Our first step is learning what businesses exist. If you own or run a small business, let us know the name of your business, where it is located, and what type of business it is. If you are interested in brainstorming with us, we would love to have your ideas and your help on our Exploration Committee.

Contact Amy and Kathryn by email at President@AAUWRedlands.org

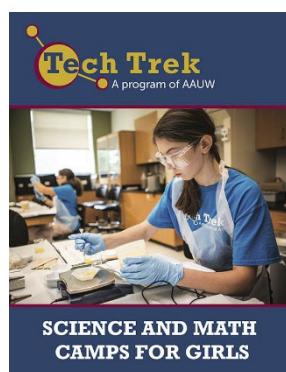
STEM Initiatives Rock!



This newsletter is full of STEM stories. That's because STEM Initiatives in our branch are a big deal.

We just successfully carried out the STEM Conference for 8th grade girls at Mt San Jacinto College in San Jacinto. Two hundred sixty-four girls from Banning, Yucaipa and Hemet registered to attend workshops in the college's STEM Building and

Makerspace. Women professionals from several STEM fields provided 12 workshops to inspire middle school girls to follow school pathways that might prepare them for future STEM interests. Significantly, at least 40 branch members were present as on-site volunteers for the day. Ask them about it: they all had a great time!



But that's not all. Committee members are currently receiving nominations to Tech Trek for seventh graders from Clement (Redlands), Park View (Yucaipa), San Gorgonio (Beaumont) and Nicolet (Banning) middle schools. Committee members will soon be reviewing applications, reading essays and scheduling interviews with girls who would like to attend Tech Trek weeklong camp either at residential camps or through the virtual camp. In addition, the Tech Trek Committee has established a new subcommittee to found an Alum group for students who have previously attended Tech Trek.

And as you well know, the STEM Conference for 8th grade girls at the University of Redlands is yet to come on February 25. At this moment, 498 girls are registered from Beaumont, Yucaipa-Calimesa and Redlands public schools.

Many members of the branch as well as friends of the branch have provided much appreciated financial support for these initiatives. The costs are high so we will always benefit from more financial support. At the February 7 branch meeting, you will find donation envelopes on the tables. You know what to do with them if you can. The girls thank you.



And come help us out!



Feb 7: following the branch meeting, we will be filling the girls' badges for the conference.

Linda Browning will be giving campus tours to those who want to help at the conference.

Feb 14: at 9:00 a.m. we will be filling the folders we give to students at the conference. We will be in the clubhouse at Lugonia Fountains. It is the tall building just inside the entrance at 1251 E Lugonia Redlands. (Bribe involved: coffee and donuts.)

Feb 25: Be a conference volunteer at the conference! See Linda Browning or Patty Ahearn.

February 2025



THANK YOU!

*~Donita Remington, Betsy Grimes,
Karen Watkins, and Pam Ford*



Welcome New members

Please welcome our two new members who joined at our January branch meeting.

Ellie Tooke *UC San Diego, BA
Arizona State Univ, JD*

Beth Leach *University of Southern California, BA*

Beth has lived in Redlands for the past seven years. She grew up in Orinda, California, and spent her junior high and high school years in Potomac, Maryland, just outside of Washington, DC. Living in different parts of the country at a young age gave her a real appreciation for education, community, and being involved in the world around her.

Beth graduated from the University of Southern California with a degree in Journalism. She now owns a marketing firm focused on helping healthcare practices grow and better connect with the families they serve. A big part of her work is storytelling and relationshipbuilding. Beth also develops marketing software and works closely with artificial intelligence to create smarter, more effective tools for doctors.

Beth cares deeply about learning, mentoring, and being part of communities where women support one another. AAUW's mission around education, equity, and opportunity really resonates with Beth, and she is excited to meet other members, learn from them, and contribute in meaningful ways.

GREAT DECISIONS 2026



The Great Decisions groups will begin meeting on Monday, March 2, and Wednesday, March 4. Great Decision is a discussion group organized through the Foreign Policy Association. We meet once a week during the months of March and April. The afternoon group meets at 1 p.m. on Mondays and the evening group meets at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays. Each week members read an article on a different foreign policy issue and then meet to discuss it. 2026 briefing books can be ordered on the Foreign Policy Association website (fpa.org) or the e-book version on Amazon.

Monday: Deb Seibly
Wednesday: Sue Ferguson

Membership News



If there is someone in our AAUW Redlands branch who would benefit from a sympathy, get well, or similar-type greeting card, please contact me at the email below, and I will send a card on behalf of all of us at AAUW.

~Susan Miller, Hospitality VP

AAUW Community Engagement



2026 Community Day of Service Saturday, March 14, 2026

We're seeking an AAUW member to help recruit other AAUW members, friends, and families to participate in this impactful once-a-year event. It will be held this year solely at Ford Park, where volunteers will beautify benches, plant plants and trees, replenish cobbles along the pond shores (4"-8" rocks so not very heavy), and do reed (pond) and weed (green areas) removal. The event culminates with a live band and free lunch at midday. Highly rewarding, it's a great day to be outdoors, smell the fresh air, feel the sun on your face, and meet new people all while tangibly making a positive impact.

What does the role ask of you? Simply be at a table in the Casa Loma room before our February and March branch meetings to share information about how members can sign up and what the day will entail. Then on the day of the event, welcome our team and pitch in. It's just that simple. You don't need to have participated ever before to handle this project successfully! If you're interested, give Amy Bisek or Kathryn Brown a call and we'll catch you up to speed.



Redlands STEM Conference

PACKET ASSEMBLY>>February 14, 9 a.m. @ Lugonia Fountains clubhouse, 1251 E Lugonia Ave., Redlands. Clubhouse is at the first stop sign. Park on the street if curb not painted red.

CONFERENCE>>NEED **GUIDES** and **HOSTS** for the STEM Conference on **February 25** at University of Redlands.

CONTACT:

~Linda Browning
~Patty Ahearn

STEM Conference Volunteer Training Sessions/Campus Orientations

Please mark your calendars for one of the two STEM Conference Campus Walking Tour and Orientation meetings on:

- **Saturday, February 7** (following the Branch meeting around 10:45)
- **Thursday, February 19** 3:00 p.m.

It is crucial for you to familiarize yourself with the University of Redlands campus buildings and understand your roles as a guide, host, or building chair.

During these sessions, we will take you on a tour of the U of R campus, highlighting routes, entrances, exits, and providing information about the conference day schedule and your specific duties.

Thank you for volunteering for the STEM Conference!

~Linda Browning 909-213-7039 Lreneb@me.com

~Patty Ahearn 909-435-5906 patty.rtdtm45@gmail.com

STEM Conference Volunteer Coordinators



AAUW Redlands Branch
Presents
32nd The 3rd Annual
STEM Conference for Eighth Grade Girls

University of Redlands Campus

Wednesday, February 25th

STEM Conference Lunch— You're Invited!

All who are volunteering at the STEM Conference for 8th Grade girls on Wednesday, February 25th, at the University of Redlands are encouraged to join the conference speakers, guests and their fellow volunteers for lunch that day in the Casa Loma Room.



Lunch offers the opportunity to network, thank and chat with our speaker volunteers, as well as to relax and discuss the day's highlights with other volunteers. The lunch menu, which will be served from 11:30- 2p.m., will feature a Pasta Trio Buffet -- Vegetable Alfredo, Rigatoni in Marinara Sauce with Meatballs and Vegan Pasta Primavera with Gluten-Free Pasta--along with Caesar salad (with a vegan dressing option) and, of course, two delicious dessert choices: Lemon Cheesecake Bars & Apple Crumb Cake (Vegan). Lunch for our speakers is complimentary.

Deadline February 7

Please contact Susan Bentley (text/call).

Credit card payments: at the February 7 branch meeting or at <https://square.link/u/j1HBfB31> for \$31.50

Zelle: via your bank app to treasurer@aauwredlands.org with memo "STEM lunch payment" for \$30



December Hike

Saha'tapa Loop Trail





From the Bridge Corner

Fall bridge lessons are finished and our newest players are busy finding opportunities to play bridge! Beginners this fall were taught the Standard American Yellow Card (SAYC) bidding system, which is currently the most popular in the US.

There has been some interest in holding a beginner class this spring, but I don't yet have enough interest to hold a class.

If you play bridge or are interested in bridge, but are not yet in a regular AAUW bridge group, please make sure I have your name, so I can include you in our communications and discussions of new bridge opportunities.

We have added a couples bridge group which will meet for the first time on Saturday Jan 24th at 4pm. In this group, you will play with the same partner for the entire evening of play, much like the bridge scramble. At least one member of the couple should be an AAUW member. If you don't have a regular partner, you can still participate. You will be assigned someone to partner for an evening. Our participant list is a nice mix of experienced and beginner players. We do have space for a few more people/couples. After the first session, we are hoping to hold this group each month on the 4th Sunday.

Contact Heather Abushanab to express your interest!

Spring BRIDGE SCRAMBLE! Save the Date: Thursday, March 26th



Bridge Scramble will now be held in the spring, and our next event is Thursday March 26th, 2026. This will be another fabulous event with several rounds of bridge, a luncheon, bake sale and prizes. Registration for the event is open, and spots are filling up quickly! Use our on-line form to register: [Bridge Scramble Registration Click Here!](#) or download the form attached to the newsletter and return it by mail. Need more information? Visit our website at [AAUW Redlands Bridge Scramble](#)

Payment for the event can be made through Zelle to treasurer@AAUWRedlands.org for no additional fee or by check to AAUW Redlands mailed to Heather Abushanab, 167 Bellevue, Redlands, CA 92373. Be sure to include Bridge Scramble in the memo.

Prefer to pay by credit card? You may pay on-line at AAUWRedlands.org for a small fee.

Extract from AAUW CA website. Full article on [Lobby Days 2026 - Advocate for Bills to Advance AAUW Values - AAUW California](#)



Lobby Days 2026 - A New Approach for Greater Impact

By Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko, Co-chairs AAUW California Public Policy

Calling all AAUW Advocates - get ready for Lobby Days 2026! Lobby Days offer an important opportunity for you to meet with legislative offices and advance our priority bills. We encourage all members to participate!

Key Dates:

- **January 6, 2026** - Lobby Day Interest Survey will be sent
- **January 16, 2026** - Survey responses due
- **January 30, 2026** - Team Rosters, including Team Leaders, will be published
- **February 9, 2026** - Team Leaders begin scheduling in-district meetings (Recommended lead time is minimum 45 days)
 - **March 27-April 17, 2026** - Recommended meeting window for in-district meetings

Spring recess: March 26-April 6 (some legislators take district meetings during this time)



An Evening of Short Films
By Women - For Everyone

FilmFest 2026: Two Opportunities to Attend

AAUW Redlands' much-anticipated FilmFest returns this spring with two opportunities to participate. FilmFest is an annual program of curated short films that highlight women's voices, stories, and perspectives, followed by opportunities for conversation and connection. As in past years, FilmFest serves as an important fundraiser supporting the AAUW Redlands Mission Fund.

FilmFest Evening Event

Friday, April 24 at 5:45 p.m. - ESRI , 380 New York St, Redlands, CA

Our traditional evening FilmFest remains the centerpiece of this fundraising event. Guests will enjoy an elegant evening featuring films, heavy hors d'oeuvres, beverages, and a relaxed social gathering in the beautiful ESRI venue. This event has sold out in the past and is recommended as the primary FilmFest experience.

Tickets are \$55 general admission, with an early-bird price of \$50 through January 30.

FilmFest Encore Matinee

Sunday, April 26, at 2:00 p.m. - Crafton Hills College

Finkelstein Performing Arts Center - 11711 Sand Canyon Rd,
Yucaipa, CA

Due to strong interest and prior sell-outs, AAUW Redlands is also offering an encore matinee screening. The matinee will not include food but will feature a post-film discussion, moderated by Heather King, University of Redlands, English Department Chair, offering further insight and conversation around the films.

Tickets for the matinee are \$25 general admission and \$15 for students.

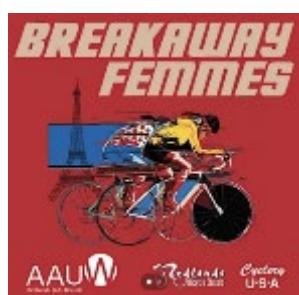
Tickets for both FilmFest events may be purchased through Eventbrite, via the AAUW Redlands website, or in person at an upcoming AAUW Redlands branch meeting. Members and guests are encouraged to attend the evening event, when possible, while the matinee offers a welcoming alternative for those unable to attend Friday evening.

Support FilmFest as a Sponsor



We also have incredible sponsorship opportunities. Visit our website for more information and sponsorship details: <https://redlands-ca.aauw.net/projects/filmfest/filmfest-sponsorship/>

Breakaway Femmes: Film Screening & Post-Film Conversation



Breakaway Femmes, a powerful documentary celebrating the pioneering women of professional cycling in the Tour de France, will be presented by AAUW Redlands, in collaboration with the Redlands Bicycle Classic and Cyclery USA.

Sunday, March 8, 2:00-4:30 p.m. Doors open at 1:30 p.m.

Finkelstein Performing Arts Center Auditorium, Crafton Hills College, 11711 Sand Canyon Rd, Yucaipa, California. Parking is free for the event. Closest parking lots are E & F

Tickets: \$20 for general admission / \$15 for students [available online @ Eventbrite](#) (with small fee) or at an AAUW Redlands branch meeting (no fee).

About the Film

For six groundbreaking years in the 1980s, women raced the same grueling course as the men. These athletes delivered unforgettable underdog victories and fierce rivalries while confronting discrimination, financial hardship, injuries, and the emerging doping culture. This special viewing is the first screening on the West Coast before general release in the U.S.

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Post Film Discussion

The audience is welcome to stay following the screening for a moderated discussion with Patty Peoples, a member of the 1984 U.S. Women's Tour de France team and a featured cyclist in the documentary.

Support

The event's proceeds go to AAUW Redlands' mission fund to advance equity for women and girls through education, empowerment, and advocacy, including scholarships, STEM education programs, and leadership training. Learn more at AAUWRedlands.org. We appreciate the Redlands Bicycle Classic and Cyclery USA for providing outreach for this event.

Order your tickets today!

HERstory – Ellen Schollenberger

By Thelma Muro



Celebrating a Life of Accomplishment — One of the “Jewels of the Inland Empire”

Ellen Schollenberger was inspired by her mother, Midge, to live a life of purpose and to make the world a better place. She was influenced by the lives of Eleanor Roosevelt and Clara Barton and strongly believed that women should have a career and be self-sufficient.

She was born in March of 1935 in Mineola, New York, and was raised in Long Island. She grew up in a household of newspaper reporters and editors, and later among historians and astronomers.

She married Frederick Schollenberger shortly after graduating from St. Luke's Nursing School. His career in the Air Force took them to many places, including Turkey, Sacramento, North Carolina, and Georgia, before they settled in Redlands in 1963.

Her love for education led her to earn her BA from the University of California, Riverside in 1972, followed by a Master of Public Health from Loma Linda University in 1975. However, she became an integral part of the Redlands community almost immediately upon her arrival.

Her first focus was promoting the nursing profession, beginning at Plymouth Village and Redlands Community Hospital. She became the founding director of the Nursing Program at the Redlands Vocational Adult School and also served on local and state committees. Her nurses were considered “the best” and went on to work at the VA, Redlands Community Hospital, and Beaver Clinic. Her program achieved a 100% pass rate on the National Licensing Exam. It provided an important pathway for immigrants, moving students from ESL (English as a Second Language) programs to CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) training and eventually into the LVN (Licensed Vocational Nursing) program. The class of 2003-B dedicated their remodeled library in her honor.

She received many recognitions for her support and involvement in Redlands community organizations. In 2008, she was named Woman of the Year by the Redlands Chamber of Commerce. She was deeply moved by the honor, knowing she was joining the company of legendary Redlands women such as Mary Kimberly Shirk and Grace Steward Mullen.

~continued on page 11



2008: Ellen Schollenberger
Nelda Stuck, Sally Vaughn, Sue Angell, Susan Kean, Sheron Bealer, Amber Costa, Ellen Schollenberger, Evelyn O'Prey, Mary Dalton, Fran Anderson, and Janice Belden

She was nominated by AAUW and described as “the epitome of the modern, capable executive multi-tasking through life.” Her more than 40 years of community service met the criteria for Woman of the Year as a “woman who by her dedication to home, religious institution, or her community has made Redlands a better place in which to live.”

She also found time to support the arts in Redlands, including involvement with the Redlands Symphony, Redlands Footlighters, LifeHouse Theater, and the Redlands Theater Festival. Her volunteerism extended to service organizations as well. She was involved with the American Red Cross for 50 years and supported ROP (Regional Occupation Program), the Health Career Advisory Committee, the American Heart Association, Redlands Area United Way, Redlands Day Nursery, the Community Scholarship Foundation, AAUW, the YMCA, the Friends of A.K. Smiley Public Library Bookstore, and the PTAs of several Redlands schools.

In 2003, she was recognized by Town and Gown’s *A Woman’s Place Is Every Place* for her many and diverse accomplishments and contributions in the Inland Empire. That year’s theme was “Jewels of the Inland Empire.”

She was also a donor to the Modern Redevelopment and Brick Preservation efforts for the bricking of State Street in the mid-1980s. Her name is engraved on a bronze plaque in recognition of her contribution to the project.

She served as the manager of the Monday morning bookstore and as a board member of the Friends of the Library. Her efforts helped expand the library’s collections and services in the late 2010s.

She joined AAUW in 1972 and became a Named Gift Honoree in 1992. In 2022, she was recognized for 50 years of continuous membership. Over those five decades, she was involved in many areas of the organization, including Program VP and a participant in Great Decisions, I Am Therefore I Think, and the earlier format of California Cuisine. She was an avid reader and co-chaired the book group (previously Reading and the Rainbow). Ellen served as the chair of the STEM conference (previously the Math-Science Conference) for several years. She participated in the STEM conference efforts in many ways, including speaker chair and host chair.

Despite her many commitments, she still found time to enjoy personal interests as a beekeeper, woodworker, and instructor of community college classes in gardening and pruning. She enjoyed swimming, reading, participating in book clubs, loved the beach, and practiced needlepointing for many years, all while staying engaged with current events. She also loved traveling and went on many cruises.

Since March 2024, Ellen has faced serious health challenges. Against all odds, she has regained her ability to speak. She enjoys listening to music, visiting with family, her two children, and three grandchildren, and delights in pet therapy visits with beagles, recalling the beagles she had as a child.

While she misses AAUW, Gold Star Wives, and her Friends of the Library activities, she misses her friends most of all. The Redlands community misses her just as deeply and is a better place because of the more than 60 years Ellen devoted to it as a resident, volunteer, and leader.

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 March newsletter is **February 10**. Send your articles to the editor via email to news@AAUWRedlands.org

Can You Provide Storage Space or Help?



If you have a climate-controlled area in your home or storage space that can hold about 12-14 banker-sized boxes, please contact us. We need a free space in which to store our branch hardcopy archives while we sort through, organize, and scan them for future electronic retention.

If you have some time on your hands, we can put it to good use. You’ll help go through these storage boxes and create an inventory of what we have, so we can find important information later when it’s needed.

~Sheron Bealer

~Amy Bisek

2026 STEM Conference @ Mt. San Jacinto College

Great News!

Our January 8th STEM Conference for 264 8th grade girls from Banning, Yucaipa, and Hemet was a great success!

Students were welcomed to the conference by our Co-president Kathryn Brown and our conference Co-chair Betsy Grimes. We were all welcomed to the college by the VP of Human Resources, Diana Galindo. The keynote speaker, Erica Alfaro, unveiled her life story in a way that many students later described as inspirational.

Her topic:

You Can Succeed Despite Adversity.

The girls attended three workshops and lunch in the Café. At lunch, the students had the opportunity to meet the keynote speaker. The workshops were all fascinating and very well prepared and executed.



The STEM conferences are truly a Redlands Branch endeavor. At least 40 branch members were present as onsite volunteers for the day. In addition, we deeply appreciate and applaud our own Susan Bangasser, Thelma Muro, and Karen Watkins who were prepared to lead a workshop and stood by in case any of our speakers could not attend.

Here are some comments from our delightful 8th graders:

- *"I loved how she (keynote speaker) shared her life challenges giving me a good perspective on not to give up when things get hard."*
- *"I learned about the OT which means occupational therapist. We had 4 scenarios and tried figure it out. This was a fun class too and got to work with new people!"*
- *"That robots and animatronic are different because animatronics are made to look more alive."*
- *"That my talents can turn into things you can use in the future."*
- *"You can do whatever you want in your life, no matter what other people say, even tho it could be hard at times."*

Thank you,

~Pam Ford and Betsy Grimes

Co-chairs for the STEM Conference at MSJC

THANK YOU

MSJC
Mt. San Jacinto College



Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko
Co-chairs, AAUW CA Public Policy Committee
<https://www.aauw-ca.org/public-policy/>



The January issue of the Public Policy News:
Lobby Days 2026 - A New Approach for Greater Impact Policy Development and Legislative Advocacy - An Infographic Take Action: Combatting the Assault on K-12 Education

[AAUW PP Newsletter January 2026](#)

GET INVOLVED

Two-Minute Activist

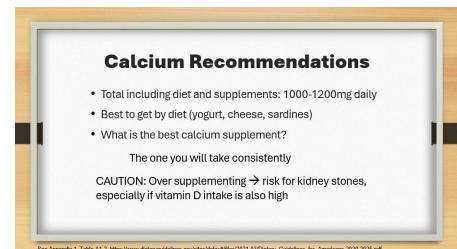
Make sure your voice is heard! We provide everything you need to contact your members of Congress and your state legislators about pressing issues. You can make a difference in just two minutes!

<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>



January Branch Meeting

Dr. Sue Hall
“Boning Up on Bone Health”



Vitamin D Recommendations

- Difficult to get from food
- Sunlight – but caution due to skin cancer
- Supplements
- Average person – 600 IU daily (controversial)
- Individuals with osteoporosis – 600 to 1000 IU daily

See Appendix 1, Table A1-2: https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2021-03/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans-2020-2025.pdf

Best Strategy

- Minimize bone loss by following universal precautions
- Get a DXA scan of hip and spine
 - All women at age 65 or older
 - Postmenopausal women younger than 65 years with ≥1 risk factors
- CRITICAL: Don't be in denial that your bone mass is decreasing every year
- Osteoporosis is the natural aging of bone (like wrinkles and skin)
- EXCEPT that osteoporosis can cause fractures with serious consequences

Best Strategy

- DXA scan results determine next steps:
 - If “normal” → wait and watch, repeat in 2 yrs
 - If “osteopenia” → discuss with provider
 - If “osteoporosis” → start medication
- Note: If you break a major bone by just falling down, YOU HAVE OSTEOPOROSIS (regardless of DXA results)

Recap of January Branch Meeting, 2026.01.06

The membership attendance at the first meeting of this new year was high at 120 attendees with an additional presence of community members who came to listen to the speaker. Susan Hall, MD, PhD, MPH, is a physician who has dedicated her career to the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis. Sue is recently retired and is a recent AAUW Redlands member. As the guest speaker, Sue's informative presentation was on the topic of Bone Health. She explained who is at risk by answering that question with, “Everyone who is getting older.” Read the minutes to find out details about her presentation, what the new promotional video highlights about AAUW R, how much was received by AAUW R on Giving Tuesday, and learn about upcoming fundraising events. ~Nan Neighbours, Secretary

January Branch Meeting



AAUW Redlands
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Branches and Twigs
Issue 7, February 2026



♥ HAPPY ♥
VALENTINE'S
DAY