



FEATHER VANE – September 2025

AAUW National Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.
Branch Mission: To advance equity for women and girls through education and networking within our diverse community.

The Executive Council meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month. Contact is Martha Bunce, 530-713-0663, If you would like to attend EC meetings as a member-at-large, please contact Martha or any EC member to volunteer. MAL appointments are made for 1 year at a time.

BRANCH MEETING – Sept. 20

When: Saturday, September 20, 2025
Time: 10 a.m. Door opens at 9:30

Where: Hillcrest Catering, 210 Julie Drive, Yuba City (on the back side of the Hillcrest Plaza Mall)

Program: Our five Tech Trek girls will talk about their experience at camp this summer
Menu: Lunch Buffet following speakers

Cost: \$20. **RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED.**
Reservations made are reservations paid. (pay at door/mail in check if you cannot attend) Tell your emailer (Gwyn Baker) or your caller (Barbara Kenney) if you are coming. Please reply **YES or NO**, by Monday prior to the meeting.

Not sure you have confirmed reservations?
 Contact Gwyn Baker, 530-632-4336.

March 30 – STEM Conference

April 18 -- Agency on Aging, learn about programs and services.

May 2– Garden Tour, no branch meeting

June 6-- The topic will be mental health

SEPTEMBER SPEAKERS - Five girls who were selected by our AAUW branch went to the AAUW Tech Trek camp at UC Davis in July. They will be our speakers at the September 20 branch meeting. Pictured here are the 2025 Tech Trekkers. Rachael Henry, McKenney School; Kylling Helzer, Brittan School; Nanki Bains, Butte Vista School; Ofelia Orozco, Brittan School; Aiya Ohri, Barry School; and Madeline Fedora (TTAG-2022), the peer counselor.



L to R: Rachael, Kylling, Nanki, Ofelia, Aiya and Madeline (peer counselor).

Program Notes *by Gwyn Baker*

Mark your calendars for the upcoming branch meeting programs and dates to remember.

Sept. 20 -- Our Tech Trek girls will tell us about their camp experiences

Oct. 18 -- Sutter County Library's Director, Ayla Elkins, will tell us about their programs

Nov. 15 -- Phyllis Smith and Victoria Tudor will share stories from their book on the Historic Marysville Cemetery.

Dec. 13 -- Women's Coalition Holiday Brunch

Jan. 17 -- Chuck Smith, editor of the Appeal Democrat

Feb. 21 -- Learn about drones from a woman who runs a drone business

March 7 -- IBC. This year's Interbranch Council Meeting will be held in Yuba City

Tech Trek update - Tech Trek is a STEM enrichment program, started in 1998 in California. It offers rising 8th-grade girls a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore STEM topics with women role models and to possibly envision a future for themselves in it. Tech Trek is now a nationwide program, organized through AAUW. There are nine camps in California this year, plus ten camps in other states.

The Tech Trek program offers both residential camps on college campuses and virtual camps held online. Residential participants live the life of a college student for a week, complete with dorm and classrooms and dining halls. Virtual camp participants enjoy the convenience of participating from home. Both programs feature inspiring interactions with women role models from STEM fields, hands-on-workshops, group projects, field trips, demonstrations, and energizing team-building fun. Activities may include building balloon-powered race cars, learning CSI-type forensics, or crafting wearable tech with moveable parts. The camps are staffed by female AAUW members and local community volunteers who are committed to the mission of helping girls navigate an-often-challenging path to STEM studies and careers.

For more than 25 years, Tech Trek has opened the eyes of more than 15,000 girls to new worlds and the camaraderie of like-minded campers interested in STEM.

AAUW branch members visit middle schools in the fall of every school year to work with science and math teachers to recruit candidates. The application process is thorough, and the goal is to select promising students who might not otherwise get such an opportunity. The partnership between principals, teachers, parents, and recruiters is crucial.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is a nonpartisan organization that was launched in 1881 to encourage women to get college educations and to fight for women's suffrage. Once women achieved the vote, branches increased fundraising for scholarships and focused their public policy work on issues that affect women and families. Today, AAUW has more than 170,000 members and 1,000 local branches. The website for Tech Trek is: aauw-ca.org/tech-trek and here are some slides <https://sites.google.com/view/ucdavistechtrek25?usp=sharing>



Several of our branch members went to Visitation Day. Here are some of them shown with our Tech Trek girls.



Feather Vane Staff

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Linda Zall - Communications Leader

Congratulations TTAG College Graduates *by Joann Nixon*

We are so happy to announce the college graduations of two of our Tech Trek Alumni Group who happen to be sisters. Aemilia Thompson (TTAG 2016) graduated from the University of California, Davis this year earning her Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science & Management with a concentration in Ecology, Conservation and Biodiversity.

Abigayle Thompson (TTAG 2018) graduated from Yuba College. She plans to transfer and continue pursuing math because she genuinely enjoys the subject.



The Thompson parents are shown here with son Augustus, and daughters Abigayle who graduated from Yuba College, and Aemilia who graduated from UC Davis.

TTAG Update, *by Joann Nixon and Julie Goldwyn Co-Chair*

Joann Nixon had the pleasure of meeting with **Latoya Green** and **Lydia Donaldson** this summer. Both young women attended Paragon Collegiate Academy and were both chosen to attend Tech Trek camp at UC Davis in 2018. Latoya and Lydia have been active participants in our TTAG program and have kept in touch with us and helped to mentor younger TTAG members at the 2024 Garden Tour Reception Site. **Latoya** is currently pursuing a career in dance and will be attending a nine-month dance program in Massachusetts this fall at the Create Learn



and Inspire Conservatory. The training she receives there will enable her to participate in Broadway performances. For the past three years, Latoya has danced with a local studio called Transition and had the opportunity to train with the Alvin Ailey Dance Studio in New York which she considered an “amazing experience”. **Lydia** is currently a student at Yuba College where she participated in a “Bee Focused Science Study” which helped her to solidify her goals of obtaining a career in lab sciences. She plans to transfer to UC Davis when she graduates from Yuba College.

Muskaan Wadhava, (TTAG 2017), was the Anatomy and Physiology Core Class Teacher at the Tech Trek Camp 2025. She plans to return to Baltimore, Maryland in September to continue earning her Bachelor of Science degree at Loyola University Maryland, which is a private Jesuit College.



Madeline Covil, (TTAG 2019), has finished her first year at the University of Alabama at Huntington where she is studying aeronautics. She has just completed a summer internship at NASA working in the Materials & Processes Branch of NASA where she studied thermal protection systems and foam insulation material. The purpose of this study is to learn about specialized



systems designed to shield objects from extreme heat that are primarily used in launch and re-entry of the earth's atmosphere.



We are very proud of these young women and look forward to keeping in touch with them and hearing about their future successes as they work towards their career goals.

Thank you! Darcy Totten (right) was our speaker at the June branch meeting. Shown here with Gwyn Baker on June 7.



On

June 7th, we were thrilled to have Darcy Totten, Executive Director of the CA Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, take the time to tell us about their work. She discussed many of the ways that women are affected by gender bias as well as listing some of their victories. They were instrumental in removing the "pink tax" in California making it illegal to charge more for

products marketed to women than the same products for men. They also passed legislation that requires job pay transparency. - You can't fix what you can't see. She gave the example of Latina surgeons making 65 cents on the dollar to the men working next to them. It was a fascinating presentation!

Sunsweet Basket Drawing - Open your pocketbooks and be ready to purchase drawing tickets at the September branch meeting for this beautiful basket from Sunsweet which they donated as in-kind sponsorship for our Garden Tour. Proceeds from the drawing will help us send more girls to Tech Trek next year.



The Feather Vane is posted on our branch website:

mvyc-ca.aauw.net/feather-vane.

If asked for a password in the FOR MEMBERS ONLY section, the password is **FMO2022**



Did you know?

Happy Birthday to the branch members whose birthdays are in September: Claudia

Chandler, Gretchen Cupp, Kathryn Medley, Kathy Nehl, Jeanine Rounds, Tanna Thomas, Cheryl Norton, Elisabeth Quick, and Molly Yager.

If we missed you, or got it wrong, please let me know. Artis Buerki, 530-632-7052.

Remembering Lorraine Ainsworth

by Tanna Thomas

Lorraine Phillips Ainsworth, who was a longtime member of the Marysville-Yuba City Branch of AAUW, passed away on June 23, 2025, at the age of 82. During her active years she was a member of the Book Club and a volunteer for various Branch programs including the annual STEM Conference held at Yuba College.

Lorraine was a dedicated educator who touched the lives of many students of all ages. She was a strong advocate for the rights of others and a long-time member of the California School Employees Association. In addition to reading, her other interests included time with friends and family, golf, travel, politics, and spending as much time as she could with her granddaughter Reilly. Lorraine will be missed by her family and friends.

Remembering Steve Clark

Sadly, Steve Clark, Carol Clark's husband, passed away in July after a short illness. Steve was active in AAUW as a long-time donor, and he was a member of our branch as our first male member. Steve was the leader of the Movie Group, and he and Carol installed the signs for the Garden Tour for years. His positive attitude and love for people will be missed. Our condolences go out to Carol and the family.



This year AAUW is pleased to support **Socktober** in Yuba-Sutter, which collects warm socks for distribution to area shelters and organizations that serve the unhoused and others in need. Please bring a pair (or pairs) of new or lightly used and laundered socks to our **October 18** branch meeting. All sizes, kids to adult, are welcome. For more information, please email Cynthia Fontayne at cynthiafontayne@gmail.com.

Book Review by Pat Jones

In July the AAUW book group Rabid Readers read The Elephant Whisperer a heartwarming story about the owner of a game reserve in South Africa, who surprised even himself when he agreed to become the owner of a herd of rogue elephants.



This book, based on real life, is a collection of memoirs by the author Lawrence Anthony. He

takes the reader through the various challenges and struggles faced by him and his employees as they worked to convince this elephant herd to stop charging humans and breaking out of the fence around his reserve. As he battled to create a bond with the elephants, he came to realize that they had a great deal to teach him about life, loyalty and freedom.

The Elephant Whisperer is one of those books that I will remember fondly long after I have finished reading it.

A Big Broken Promise to America's Students and Women by Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director, Policy & Member Advocacy.

July 2, 2025, WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congress has passed a bill that will go down in history not as a beautiful promise fulfilled — but as a big broken promise to America's students, working families, and especially to women.

From early learning through graduate school, this bill deals a devastating blow to educational opportunities in America. It slashes financial aid, eliminates vital student loan programs, and channels public dollars into private voucher schemes — all while doing nothing to ensure that participating schools uphold civil rights protections. Instead of expanding access, it erects new barriers that will shut out millions of students, especially women, low-income families, and communities of color. This bill makes drastic cuts to Medicaid; it threatens reproductive freedom and the health and economic security of the very people who rely on education as a path to a better future.

For AAUW, this is personal. We are the nation's largest non-institutional funder of women's graduate education. For more than 140 years, we've fought to open the doors of higher education to all women — not just those who can afford it. And we know the truth: when women lose access to education, they lose access to opportunity, economic security, and equity.

This bill: **Undermines educational equity** by using tax breaks to fund private school voucher programs without requiring participating schools to follow Title IX, Title VI, or disability laws — creating a loophole that permits legal discrimination against students.

Shuts women out of higher education by eliminating Graduate PLUS loans and creating borrowing caps that disproportionately harm women of color, single mothers, and first-generation students.

Attacks reproductive health and health care access by essentially defunding Planned Parenthood and making sweeping changes to

Medicaid that will strip coverage from millions of women — leaving them without access to birth control, cancer screenings, and maternal care.

This bill does not reflect the values of fairness, inclusion, or opportunity. It is a deliberate rollback of hard-won rights, passed at the expense of women's futures and our nation's progress.

As the bill headed to the president's desk, AAUW calls on the administration to reckon with what this legislation truly means — and to recognize the irreversible harm it will cause to students, families, and our economy now and in years to come. AAUW and our nationwide network of members and advocates will not stop fighting until every student — regardless of gender and race, income, or zip code — has full and equal access to education, civil rights, and opportunity.

INTEREST SECTIONS - All branch members are welcome to participate.



ADVOCACY & ACTION - To receive advocacy and action alerts by email, contact Martha Bunce email buncehall@yahoo.com and ask her to add you to her email contact list.



ALL AROUND TOWN - Dinner group, All Around Town, normally meets on the **2nd Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm** at a local restaurant. Contact Betty Bonner, 530-301-2265 to join the group.

In June All Around Town dinner group went to Pasquini's in Live Oak.



AAUW MARYSVILLE-YUBA CITY

In August the dinner group went to The Spot on Oswald Road in Yuba City. *Photo by Christy Estabrook*



CORK DORKS - The Cork Dorks meet at members' homes on the **3rd Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.** If you are interested in spending an evening with friends, tasting wine, and sharing good conversation, contact Linda Zall, 530-713-0552, or Betty Bonner, 530-301-2265.

Here are the Cork Dorks in August. Relaxing at Monica Quilty's home.



In July the Cork Dorks were at Liz's home.



Feather Vane SEPT. 2025



Here they are in June in Betty's backyard. *Photos by Sue Palm.*



MOVIE GROUP -If you want to be on the Movie Group email list contact Diana McVicker, dilmcivicker2521@gmail.com. Please let her know if there are upcoming movies that you want to see when they come to our area.



RABID READERS - Book Club meets on the **3rd Friday of the month at 10 am** at the Sutter County Library. Contact Linda Zall, lindazall-66@gmail.com, 530-713.0552.



TALKING ON PAPER - Writing group meets on the **2nd Tuesday of the month, 10 am** at Sutter County Library. Members who like to express themselves on paper are invited to attend. Please join us. Contact Bunny Parcher, 530-272-3895 or Artis Buerki, 530-632-7052.

TRAVELING GOURMET - Lunch group goes to restaurants within about a 50-mile radius of Yuba City normally on the **4th Thursday of the month**. To carpool we meet at the Yuba City Raley's Shopping Center parking lot (at the east end between Wendy's & Huckleberry Restaurant} at about 10:15 and leaves at 10:30. Reserve for Traveling Gourmet by the Monday prior to the lunch.
Call Carol Clark, 530-301-2164 or Christy Estabrook 530-713-5223 if you want to be on the contact list.

In May Traveling Gourmet went to the Wise Villa Winery in Lincoln.



Executive Council Planning Meeting June 19, 2025

These are the minutes of the Annual Planning Meeting for the Executive Council where decisions were made for the coming AAUW branch year.



In Attendance: Linda Zall, Martha Bunce, Cheryl Hoke, Joann Nixon, Sandy Davini, Joyce Smith, Debbie Naylor, Gwyn Baker, Carol Clark, Liz Skelly, Ellen O'Neil, Kathy Nehl, Christy Estabrook.

The meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m. at the home of Martha Bunce. The minutes from the May meeting were read and reviewed; accepted with no corrections or additions.

Martha addressed a succession plan and restructuring of the Executive Council. The office of Treasurer is the only elected position for a single year. All other members are elected to the Executive Council for 3 years and specific positions are

determined by ability and willingness to take on specific duties.

Some roles have become too large for one person. An example is the Treasurer position. There are extensive duties involved in membership and with online sales for the Garden Tour. Liz is already supporting Sandy, by handling the financial registrations for the regular Branch meetings. Sandy plans to work with Joyce to recruit branch members to assist her with membership and online sales and will report back to the Executive Council. Gwyn will research various platforms for online sales.

Discussion centered around motivating members to get involved in the goals and activities of the branch. Ensuring that members understand all that the branch does, a New Member Orientation will be held approximately 45 minutes before each Branch meeting. New members will be called and invited. However, any member that would like to know more will also be welcomed through the e-mails announcing the meeting and through the *Feather Vane*. Cheryl is willing to take on the development of the orientation and Carol will assist her. As an incentive, there will be a drawing for a free lunch for attendees of the orientation.

Regarding the restructuring of the current Executive Council: each current participant will look for someone to mentor over the next year to take on the position. Those with terms ending in the next year are Linda and Ellen.

Treasurer's Report: There are currently 96 members; the budget is planned with 100 in mind.

Branch meetings average an attendance of 45.

Three free memberships are planned for next year, awarded to someone who has high participation, high contribution and/or hardship.

Sandy reviewed line-item changes for approval:

Line item 26: Maintain current amount of \$1000 for the Day for Women annual event

Line item 27: Description will read: support "re-entry" college students.

Line item 29: Increase donation to the Mary Aaron Museum from \$50 to \$100

Line item 30: Sutter County Library has \$50 allocated for memorial gifts

Line item 30a \$200 donation to Sutter County Friends of the Library

Line item 31: Sutter County Museum membership \$100

Line item 32: Increase donation to Yuba College Emergency Fund from \$500 to \$1000

EC voted as follows to approve the budget with the changes listed above Martha/Carol/Unanimous
It will be presented for a full membership vote at the September meeting.

Membership: Twenty-seven people need to renew before June 30th, otherwise they will owe another \$10 after July 1st. EC members divided up the names to call and remind those that haven't paid.

Communication: Gwyn reminded EC that there are two Facebook pages. One is an open page for our branch which anyone can access. The other is private, requiring a request to join. Again, she encourages everyone to re-post appropriate items and do whatever possible to increase traffic.

STEM Conference: It is scheduled for **March 30, 2026**. The committee will begin monthly meetings on **October 9th**.

Garden Tour Committee: Meets **August 7th**.

Tech Trek Committee: Meets **August 7th**.

The next Branch Meeting is **September 20, 2025**.



Executive Council meeting August 14, 2025

In attendance: Christy Estabrook, Gwyn Baker, Debbie Naylor, Kathy Nehl, Martha Bunce, Linda Zall, Brenda Mock, Ellen O'Neil

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:09p.m.

Corrections to the minutes from the Executive Council Planning Meeting in June were to add Kathy Nehl and Christy Estabrook to the attendance. Minutes were approved with no other corrections or additions.

Martha brought up Succession Planning as the first order of business. Other AAUW branches throughout the country have written Succession Plans and they are available online. Additionally, there are AI plans available through Chat GPT.

Public Policy: National AAUW is vocal in its opposition to the administration's attack on women's rights. They are hosting a Zoom panel discussion on Title IV. Members should have received information through California AAUW as to how to join the session.

Treasurer's Report: In Sandy's absence, Martha distributed the year's proposed budget and reviewed a few line items. It will be printed in the yearbook and voted on at the September Branch meeting.

Membership: Linda passed out a comprehensive list titled, "Proposed Membership Duties". Kathy Nehl, Cheryl Hoke, Lee Jones and Joyce Smith are willing to help her to determine who does what. Discussion followed regarding incorporating new members through an orientation, a brochure through which they learn what the Branch does, and all the interest groups. Also discussed were ideas for ensuring that attendees at monthly meetings are artfully arranged in order to properly include new members.

At this point the Executive Council left the meeting room at the Sutter County School Superintendent's office. Inquiry revealed that we were inadvertently in a room that was booked at 2:00. Therefore, the meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Editor's Note: Please contact Executive Council Secretary for the final approved minutes after the next Executive Council Meeting

IBC News: The Oroville AAUW Branch will have a Welcome Back Meeting with dessert buffet on Saturday, September 13, 2025, 1 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 1715 Bird St., Oroville. Topic is Human Rights; THE COURAGE TO BE GENUINE with speaker Alice Kubecki. This is an Oroville fundraiser for Tech Trek and all are invited to attend. \$20. RSVP: aauw.oroille.ca@gmail.com

Quotes for the month:

"People who think they know everything are a great annoyance to those of us who do." — Isaac Asimov

"The secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age." — Lucille Ball



empowering women since 1881

FEATHER VANE, Artis Buerki, Editor

P.O. Box 334, Sutter, CA 95982

**We are all Wonder Women.**

Our Branch Facebook pages are: *AAUW Marysville Yuba City* (organization page),
AAUW-MVYC Group (open group page), and *Art in the Gardens* (open group page).

Our branch website is: <http://mvyc-ca.aauw.net/>

AAUW California website: www.aauw-ca.org/

AAUW National website: www.aauw.org

September 2025

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
	1	2	3	4 Garden Tour Com. Tech Trek Com.	5	6
7	8	9 10 am Talking on Paper (writing)	10 5:30 pm All Around Town (dinner)	11 1 pm Executive Council	12	13
14	15	16 5:30 pm Cork Dorks (wine tasting)	17	18	19 10 am Rabid Readers (books)	20 10 am Branch Meeting
21	22	23	24	25 10:30 am Traveling Gourmet (lunch)	26	27
28	29	30				