



October 2020



CO-PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As many of you already know, **Ginger Wilson** has resigned as Co-President, having moved to Sparks, NV recently. Her energy and insight will be missed in that role, but thankfully she remains a member. Thanks, Ginger, for your work.

This column was going to feature AAUW-CA's support for some of the various Propositions on the California ballot that relate to the identified core missions of AAUW. If interested, please click on:

<https://www.aauw-ca.org/proposition-update/>

We have bigger fish to fry today.

I confess to magical thinking about **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**: that she would live to be at least 100, still on the court, never missing a day of work. She is the epitome of a consequential life, and every woman (and man) owes her a deep debt of gratitude for her advocacy work both as an attorney and as a justice.

Justice Ginsburg had a quick wit, which if you read her legal arguments while a practicing attorney (she co-founded the ACLU's Women's Rights Project), her decisions as a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (where she served for 13 years) and as an Associate Justice on the US Supreme Court (where she served for 27 years), her arguments and opinions cut through the chaff and legal machinations to get to the practical heart of the matter at hand.

This column is too short, alas, to wax rhapsodic on her written body of work and do her justice (pun intended).

In the landmark case of *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), which granted same-sex couples the right to marry in all 50 states, she called out the regressive arguments of the lawyers representing the states which wished to uphold a same-sex marriage ban. She even dissed Justices John Roberts and Anthony Kennedy, who mused during oral arguments whether the Court could overturn marital tradition. "Marriage was a relationship of a dominant male to a subordinate female. That ended as a result of this court's decision in 1982 when Louisiana's Head and Master Rule was struck down ... Would that be a choice that states should [still] be allowed to have? To cling to marriage the way it once was?" She derided the procreation argument that marriage should be reserved for a union between a man and a woman by asking whether a 70-year-old heterosexual couple would then be allowed to marry when clearly, they could not procreate. Ultimately, the court ruled 5-4 in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage.

Her most rapier-like comments can be found in her dissenting opinions. One particularly relevant, given the current voter suppression efforts in this election, can be found in *Shelby County v. Holder*, the 2013 decision that gutted the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Section 4b of that landmark legislation intended to bar racial discrimination in voting by enacting special requirements for certain parts of the country that had a particularly terrible track record of suppressing minority voters. Under Section 5 of the act, a policy known as "preclearance" required states like Alabama, Texas and Arizona to receive approval from

<https://northtahoecaaauw.net/>

the attorney general or a three-judge panel in Washington, D.C. before making any changes to their voting requirements.

Alabama's Shelby County challenged the constitutionality of the decades-old act. In a 5-4 opinion, the Supreme Court agreed, claiming that the restrictions were outdated in the modern era and that it was an unconstitutional violation for Congress, rather than states themselves, to set the terms of elections.

In a blistering dissent, Ginsburg wrote: "Throwing out preclearance when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet." In the years since Section 5 was overturned, states previously covered by preclearance have enacted a rash of new laws making it more difficult to vote in those states.

With great sadness, RIP RBG.

Remember: Vote early, but not often, despite the President's advice.

Kym Pipkin - kymberly.pipkin@icloud.com

Johnnie Lee Don - johnnieledon1@gmail.com

LEADERSHIP MEETING

October 8 – 1 pm via Zoom.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

GENERAL MEETING

October 8 - 10:30 am (Zoom): Imelda Valdez, Residential Program Manager, Sierra Community House.

November 12 – 1 pm (Zoom): Jeff Fischer, owner of Darling & Fischer family mortuaries in the South Bay: "*Things You've Always Wanted to Know but Were Reluctant to Ask...*"

General Meeting - October 8th - 10:30 am by Zoom

Join us on Thursday October 8th to hear Imelda Valdez share her experience working with survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse and child abuse.

Watch for an email containing a **Zoom link to register** in advance **for the meeting**.

Program Speaker - *Imelda Valdez*



Imelda Valdez was born in Mexico and immigrated to the United States at the age of six. It was difficult for her to adapt to "new parents" and to learning a new language and culture.

But thirteen years later, after working multiple jobs and being involved in the community, she graduated from Truckee High School in 2011. That same year, she was accepted to the California State University, Chico as a first-generation student.

During her time at Chico State, she completed over 200 hours of volunteer work at *Safe Place*, a domestic violence and sexual abuse agency on campus. She also served as a Community Services Officer and was later promoted to Field Training Officer at the University Police Department.

In 2015, she studied abroad in Madrid, Spain and graduated the following year with a BA in Criminal Justice and a minor in Spanish and Diversity Studies.

In 2016, Imelda started working as a part-time bilingual advocate at **Tahoe SAFE Alliance** (formerly Tahoe Women Services). In a few weeks, she was promoted to full-time bilingual advocate where she worked directly with survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse and child abuse in the Safe House.

For approximately three years, she continued working two jobs: at Tahoe SAFE Alliance as well as in security at Martis Camp.

Imelda has always expressed interest in pursuing a career in helping survivors of human trafficking. With her manager's support, she continued learning and training on identifying and working with human trafficking victims. In May 2020, she became the Residential Program Manager. She supervises the

only North Lake Tahoe Domestic Violence, Sexual Abuse, and Child Abuse Safe House at **Sierra Community House** (formerly Tahoe SAFE Alliance).

Imelda's long-term goal is to work for law enforcement or a non-profit agency to help survivors of human trafficking. She continues to learn about the topic to bring awareness and services to survivors of human trafficking in the area.

Johnnie Lee Don – johnnieledon1@gmail.com



AAUW FUND

Thank you to all of you generous ladies who have contributed to the AAUW Fund in 2020. There are still 3 months left in this fiscal year to make a contribution if you have not already done so.

There are two ways to contribute:

The first is to write a check to the **AAUW Fund** and mail it to our branch at P.O. Box 5612, Tahoe City, CA 96145.

The second way is through AAUW national website:

<https://ww2.aauw.org/donate-gift-new/>

Please notify our finance officer **Patricia Watters** at pwrl@aol.com if you donate in this way. You can specify that your gift goes to support specific initiatives shown on the website or to where it is most needed.

The two Fall luncheons to meet and honor the 2020-2021 California Fellows/Grant recipients will be held virtually this year on **October 10** and **October 24 at 1 pm**. If you are interested in attending, you can sign up by clicking on:

<https://www.aauw-ca.org/2020-2021-webinars/>

then scroll down to 10/10/2020 and 10/24/2020 AAUW Fund Luncheon.

Rachael Swift – racswift@gmail.com



We will contact Jeff Ream at North Tahoe High School in December to begin the process of selecting a candidate for 2021.

Linda Larish – llarish@sbcglobal.net

Christine Madden – madden@garlic.com



Below is the email sent on September 18 by AAUW-CA Tech Trek State Coordinators Alice Hill and Susan Negrete regarding Tech Trek 2021:

Yesterday AAUW National announced that in the 2021 season, Tech Trek camps in all states must be delivered on a virtual platform. This decision was made due to the many unknowns and changing regulations, which are happening so rapidly that in-person events cannot be advised this far in advance.

They also advised that all states should delay student recruitment until further into 2021.

As announced in prior communications, since the cancellation of our 2020 season, California Tech Trek has been working on alternative solutions, which includes a fully tested virtual platform option designed and implemented by our UC San Diego camp director. In addition, our delay of the student selection process to January 2021 aligns with the National decision.

While this announcement is certainly a disappointment, but not a surprise given the pandemic still actively impacting our country, the California Tech Trek Program leaders are fully prepared to continue the Tech Trek tradition by providing selected campers with a stimulating, fun and rewarding STEM virtual experience.

Rest assured that when the time is right, our goal is a return to the residential Tech Trek camp model that since 1998, has been AAUW California's premier STEM camp legacy.

California Tech Trek will not go dark in 2021 - we're looking forward - and we appreciate your support and enthusiasm!

Regards,

Susan Negrete & Alice Hill

AAUW-CA State Co-Coordinators Tech Trek Program

Our branch will await guidance on contacting our local school regarding nominations for 2021.

On a happier note, **Jayme Gabriel**, who spoke virtually with our 2020 Trekkers in July, emailed us a link to a contest sponsored by NASA for all students K-12. <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/stem/artemis-essay-contest>.

Per the info at the link above: *"Every student who submits an essay will receive an official certificate and be invited to a NASA virtual event featuring an astronaut! Semifinalists will be invited to represent their state or territory in a series of Artemis Explorer sessions with NASA experts. Nine finalists will have the opportunity to travel with a parent to [NASA's Johnson Space Center](#) next summer to learn about lunar exploration. The national winner in each grade division will win a family trip to see the first Artemis flight test, watching the most-powerful rocket in the world launch from NASA's [Kennedy Space Center](#) in Florida."*

Jayme has worked for 12 years with **Boeing Space at NASA in Huntsville, Alabama**. Her previous role with NASA was as a payload specialist for the **International Space Station**. Jayme grew up in Grass Valley and has stayed in close contact with Martha Rees, UC Davis camp coordinator.

Meri McEneny- Tech Trek Coordinator
mmceneny@gmail.com



MEMBERSHIP

Our current membership count is **58**.

I have heard from most of our members and am waiting for a few stragglers before I create the Membership Directory for 2020-2021.

A printed version will be available by the end of October for members who want a hard copy. The updated directory will also appear on the website. Our new directory will include birthdays for most members so that we can celebrate birthdays -- perhaps at the General Meetings.

Due to the pandemic restrictions, we will not be holding an in-person Wine and Cheese Orientation this fall. However, our wonderful wine expert, **Patricia Watters**, has offered to help us connect our membership with a remote "**Grape Expectations**"

event using Zoom to include current and potential new members. Stay tuned for more information!

Cheryl Allen - VP Membership - cherylkallen@cs.com

The member directory is available on the branch website.

<https://northtahoe-ca.aauw.net/members/>

Contact Dana Loury (dn.loury@gmail.com) for the password to access the online directory.

If you know someone who would like to join our branch, contact **Cheryl Allen** (cherylkallen@cs.com) for a membership application form, or download it from our website:

<https://northtahoe-ca.aauw.net/about/membership-information/>



Membership Communications

Please let our corresponding secretary **Linda Larish** (llarish@sbcglobal.net) know about any member news that should be recognized with a card or note from our branch.

The following cards were sent in the past month:

Christine Madden – Get Well for Lew.

Dr. John Henry Beyer – Thank You for presentation.

INTEREST GROUPS



Proposed Outdoor Activities Groups... As Soon As the Smoke Clears

A few members have expressed an interest in three outdoor groups:

- **Walking/snowshoeing** (led by Dianne Lange at diannelange@me.com)
- **Biking and Kayaking** (led by Ann Yuhas at dannyuhas@hotmail.com).

If you are interested, please contact the activity leader. For walking, please indicate what weekday mornings work best for you.



BOOK GROUP

Book Group will meet on Tuesday, **September 29th, 12:30 pm** via Zoom to discuss "*White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism*" by Robin DiAngelo. **Cheryl Allen** will lead the discussion.

In **October**, our meeting will be on the **27th at 12:30 pm** via Zoom to review "*Villette*" written by Charlotte Bronte. The discussion will be led by **Dianne Lange**.

Watch for emails containing Zoom links to register in advance for the meetings. Please join us.

Esther Sonnenberg

530.546.2884 - esthers712@sbcglobal.net

Jo Ann Cobb -650.483.6446 - jscobb@sbcglobal.net



BRIDGE

The bridge group has been inactive during this COVID- 19 period of social distancing. I have just sent out an email to the group to see if there is any interest in playing online utilizing the **Trickstercards.com** website. It seems that Remote is the way to go these days.

Playing online on Trickster is a suggestion from **Patricia Watters**, who as we all know, comes up with great ideas! When and how to do this will take some tweaking. Not quite as simple as organizing a group on Zoom, yet this is an idea with possibility. Some of us have been playing on Trickster already.

To anyone reading this, if you have suggestions, advice or questions, please feel free to contact me.

Happy Fall everyone.

Betsey Husted - betseyhusted18@gmail.com



GREAT DECISIONS

Great Decisions will have our October meeting on **October 20th**. The subject matter will be "*Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data*". (Our discussion on the Philippines is postponed until November 17th).

Our discussion leader will be **Ann Lyman**. Our Zoom coordinator, **Jo Ann Cobb** will be contacting the GD group with Zoom registration one week prior to the meeting.

The October subject will take in America's uneven approach to AI and its consequences, the ecological balance of the world's water and the computer systems that can sense our environment. We will also discuss the current steps being taken to advance AI in order to undermine its function as a global public good. Have we as a country focused too much on business needs ignoring the broader research potential of AI?

Great Decisions meets on the third Tuesday of each month from **10 am until noon**. Sometimes, however, being a loquacious group of well-informed women, we tend to carry on beyond our appointed time (such a pleasure)!

Linda Schwoob - lschwoob@yahoo.com

North Tahoe AAUW website:

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

AAUW California website:

<http://www.aauw-ca.org/>

Username: **member**

Password: **aauwca** (case sensitive)



CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- 08: General and Leadership Meetings
- 20: Great Decisions
- 27: Book Group