

AAUW

THE INSIGHTER

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Our Supporters



April 1, 1865 - During the American Civil War, Confederate troops under General George Pickett were defeated and cut off at Five Forks, Virginia. This sealed the fate of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's armies at Petersburg and Richmond and hastened the end of the war.

April 1, 1998 - A federal judge in Little Rock, Arkansas, dismissed a sexual harassment case against President Bill Clinton, stating the case had no "genuine issues" worthy of trial. Although President Clinton had denied any wrongdoing, a unanimous ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in May 1997 allowed the case to proceed, thereby establishing a precedent allowing sitting presidents to be sued for personal conduct that allegedly occurred before taking office.



WEBSITE

Please visit our website <https://merced-ca.aauw.net/> regularly for information about programs and activities.

"In a world that is becoming increasingly virtual, the parks remain places of visceral beauty. Places where we can remember that we are but a small part of the life on this planet, and that it is a truly wonderful planet and the only one we've got."—*Nevada Barr*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

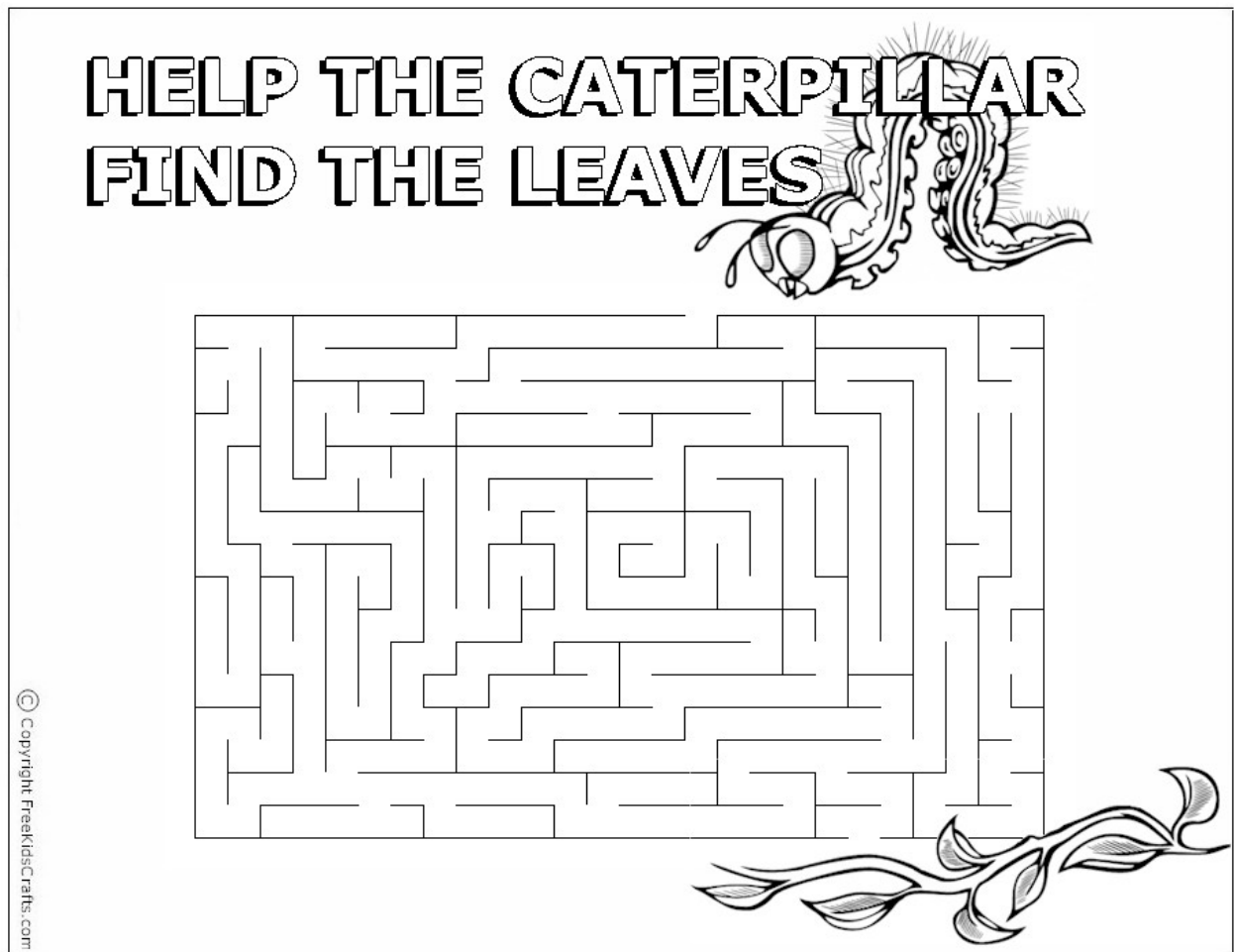
Here it is the end of our year for AAUW. Our last big event is the Spring Brunch. This year we are having it on April 27, 2024, at Linda Lucas' home, 2501 St. Augustine Ct. in Merced. It will be my last meeting as the President. I have really enjoyed my term - especially all the laughing at the Board meetings. My favorite events this year included the yoga class and the travelogue of Florence, Italy, presented by Ruth Wax. A special thanks goes out to our two Science Camp leaders, Dena Traina and Kathleen Hull. They both have other hard jobs on the board as newsletter and website developers. Double kudos for them. Megan Anderson is the best treasurer and Kathleen McElwain is the best secretary.

We will be installing a new board at the brunch. We are still looking for a Leader for the Interest Sections.

This year, I managed to read Lessons in Chemistry, by Bonnie Garmus. It was suggested at our last Spring Brunch. So good. I believe that you are not lazy if you are reading a book. Maybe we will get another book list this year.

Keep in touch, go to sections this summer, if they are available. Have fun.

Your outgoing President, Sue Chappell



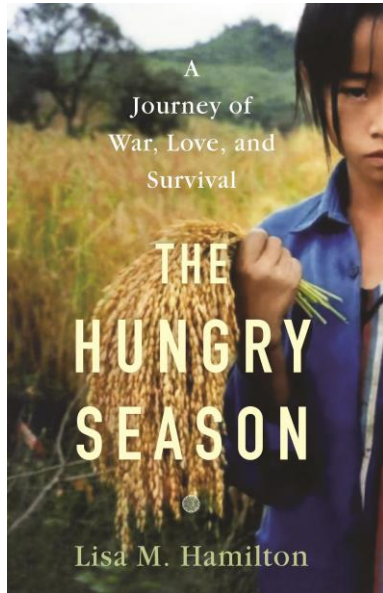


MARCH PROGRAM RECAP AND SLATE OF OFFICERS

Unfortunately, our speaker could not make it due to illness. Stay tuned, it will still happen. That will give you time to read her book.

Lisa M. Hamilton: *The Hungry Season*

Everyone is invited to attend what will be a memorable event as California author Lisa M. Hamilton is joined by Hmong scholar Seng Alex Vang for a conversation about Hamilton's new book, *The Hungry Season: A Journey of War, Love, and Survival*.



When:
TBD

Where:
TBD

This event will be interpreted live in Hmong. Free headsets available. The event is being co-sponsored with the Friends of the Library. Admission will be free.

About The Hungry Season:

Reported over seven years, *The Hungry Season* is the intimate biography of Fresno farmer Ia Moua. Born in Laos, Moua fled home in the wake of the American sponsored war, then spent fifteen years in a refugee camp in Thailand before immigrating to the United States. Acclaimed as one of the best nonfiction books of 2023 (*Kirkus Reviews*), *The Hungry Season* chronicles how Moua navigated the devastating loss of everything she loved, and at the same time reinvented herself into someone more powerful than she ever imagined she could be. This is your chance to connect with the author on a personal level and gain unique insights into the book's complex creative process.

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2024-2025

President	Becky Tietjen
Vice President	Sharon Spinardi
Past President	Sue Chappell
Secretary	Kathleen McElwain
Treasurer	Megan Anderson
Memberships	Dee Near
Science Camp	Kathleen Hull/Dena Traina
Website	Kathleen Hull
Newsletter	Dena Traina
Scholarships	Nancy Young Bergman
Programs	Ruth Wax, Linda Lucas, Jane Lawrence
Interest Sections	Nancy Barber



AAUW Friends at Friends of the Library



APRIL PROGRAM

APRIL PROGRAM

Our next program is a **SPRING BRUNCH!**

Don't miss our last official program of the year: our annual Spring Brunch! We will have a lovely brunch, install next year's officers, and review what was accomplished this year with a special focus on our very successful Science Camp. This is an event not to miss!

When: **Saturday, April 27th, from 10:00 AM - Noon**

Where: Linda Lucas' home, 2501 St. Augustine Ct. in Merced.

Who: AAUW Members and guest(s)

How: RSVP by **April 24th** to Linda Lucas. Text to 209.631.6741 or email to llucas49@comcast.net

Cost: \$10 (Guests are free, but if you can pay for your guest, please do as that will help defray some of our costs.)

The Board and I look forward to seeing you on April 27th at the Lucas'.

Fun Facts about April

April is known for beautiful spring weather, the start of warmer weather, and right about the time when the Easter bunny often makes an appearance!

Learn all about the origins of this beautiful spring month and even some knowledgeable historical facts!

We know it is the fourth month of the year, but that's only by the Gregorian calendar that we adhere to now. It was previously the fifth month in the earlier Julian calendar.

April also only had 29 days, but a 30th day was added when Julius Caesar established the Julian calendar.

In the Southern Hemisphere, April is the seasonal equivalent of [October](#).

No one is sure how the month ended up with its name, but we do know that the Romans named it "Aprillis."

The etymology behind the word "April" comes from the verb "aperire," which means "to open." It's commonly believed that the word refers to the season of trees and flowers begin to "open" or bloom.

Those who were born in April have a [diamond](#) as their birthstone, which represents innocence. Their birth flowers are [daisies and sweet peas](#).

There are two zodiac signs in April. Aries, which is until [April 19th](#), and Taurus, which is April 20th and onwards.





SECTIONS

Adopt-a-Highway: Chair – Kem Shrum 489-8130 kkshrum@yahoo.com

Become a part of the group of volunteers who clean up the AAUW stretch of Hwy.140 on the way to Mariposa. The group goes out early on a Saturday morning four times a year. Watch your newsletter or email for times and dates. Cal Trans has approved resumption of our highway cleaning projects.

Aloha Ukulele: Chair – Sue Chappelle 725-9082 sue.e.chappell@gmail.com
Ukulele lessons and jam sessions anyone? Please sign-up and we'll make it happen!

Almost Gourmet: Chair – Karen Wallace 722-5289 the.wallaces@comcast.com

Couples gather for four dinners a year. This group is closed. Currently meeting outdoors.

Book Section 1: Chair – Kathy Berkeley 581-1599 bekeleykathy@gmail.com

Meets the first Monday of the month at 2:00 p.m. from October through May at a member's home. Members read a fiction or non-fiction book of their choice and different reviewers share a favorite book each month. Once a year we do a group read.

Book Section 2: Chair – **A new section! Do you love a good mystery? This group is for you! Call or text Judy Smith.**

Book Section 3: Chair – Sharon Wainwright sharonlwa@comcast.net

Members meet the first Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. and rotate between members' homes. We select a book to read, to be read by all, for each meeting, and a volunteer guides us through the discussions. Due to a large membership, you are welcome to sign up on our waiting list.

Book Section 4 (Evening Book Group): Chair Dee Near 723-9007 neard@comcast.net

Meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at a member's home. This group has been meeting for 20 years. Everyone reads the same book and discusses it. A wide variety of genres are read. All are welcome. This section meets August through May.

Bridge Couples: Chair – Pauline Cuchna (209) 658-6321 samnilla@sbcglobal.net

Meets on the last Monday of the month at 1:00 p.m. The group rotates between members' homes. Subs are welcome. This section meets September through May.

Bridge Singles: Chair – Pauline Cuchna 209-658-6321 samnilla@sbcglobal.net

Meets the third Monday of the month at 1:00 p.m. The group rotates between members' homes. Dessert is offered. Subs are welcome. This section meets October through May.

Bunko: Chair – Cheryl Burke – 726-8481 cdinesburke@gmail.com

Meets the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. There is a lot of lively interaction for the members of this group. Since we have 12 members already, you are welcome to sign up for the substitute list. All members and subs are required to be vaccinated and boosted. This section meets September through May with no meeting in December.

Chocoholics: Chair – Diana Alexander 658-1647 dianaalex51@gmail.com

Meets the third Wednesday of the month at members' homes at 7:00p.m. from October through May. Members should be prepared to either host or co-host one meeting per year. They prepare a special chocolate dish for the event.

Knitting and Crocheting: Chair – Dena Traina 777-5227 traina.dena@gmail.com

Meets the second Wednesday of the month at a member's home between 6:00-8:00 p.m. Beginners and experienced knitters/crocheters are welcome. Refreshments provided. This section meets all year.

Let's Craft: Co-Chair – Ashley McComb (209)761-7873 leymc84@hotmail.com
Kimberly McComb mccombkd@gmail.com

Meets the third Friday of the month at 5:30 pm. We will rotate between local craft venues to offer a variety of experiences. The crafts will vary between floral arrangements, painting, and craft workshops, etc. This section is for all skill levels.

Lunch Bunch: Chair – Connie Brons 385-3837 conniebrons@yahoo.com

Meets the last Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at various restaurants. Members are notified by email as to the location. Be sure to RSVP by contacting Connie to ensure a reservation. This section meets all year round.

Play Goers: Chair – Robyn Farnsworth 382-0548 yaya4three@gmail.com

Members will see 5-6 plays during the year on Sunday afternoons. This section meets August through May. Will start up again as soon as theater schedule is published. **New members are welcome**

Quasi-Epicures: Chair – Holly Zacharias 722-4428 hwzacharias@gmail.com

Sadly the Quasi-Epicures have decided to call it quits. I'm leaving in the description this year in the hopes that, perhaps, it can be resurrected in the future. Members are notified by email to dine out at a local restaurant and see a play at Playhouse Merced on Saturday evenings. This section meets October through May or June.

Sierra Trekkers: Chair – Judy Smith (777-5345) and Jennifer Foster 722-3649 sierratrekker@comcast.net or one4cats@att.net

Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 in members homes (except in December). The September planning meeting maps out the tentative dates for hikes during the year. Hikes usually occur once per month. The emphasis is on hiking – mostly easy to moderate. Occasionally we do a more strenuous trail. Weather permitting, a snowshoe hike in the winter months can be planned. The group occasionally travels for overnight/weekend adventures. One longer trip is scheduled each year to one of our nation parks.

Summer Swim: Chair – Chair: Sue Chappell (209)-500-8832 sue.e.chappell@gmail.com

May 1 through October – Wednesday afternoons (time TBD) at Sue's pool. Come join us for water walking, lap swimming, cooling off, relaxing, and conversation! Bring a snack to share and your own drink.

Together Women Rise: Chair – Jane Guerra 723-0384 nickandjane@guerra.net

Meets the first Monday of the month at 6:00p.m. at a member's home for a potluck dinner. Money is donated in the amount that would have been spent on a restaurant dinner to the organization featured each month. The mission is to empower women and girls living in extreme poverty by funding programs. Members become educated to various needs of women living in poverty around the world. The group meets September through June. Members are asked to host or co-host one dinner. **New members are welcome.**

Wine and Cheese: Chair – Colleen Eisberg 725-9082 eisberg@sbcglobal.net
Meets the last Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at various members' homes. The hostess and co-hostess determine the theme and prepare a selection of cheese and hors d'oeuvres. Spouses are welcome. This section meets September through May with no meeting in November or December. Come share the story of your wine and share tasting with the group. **New members welcomed.**



SECTION NEWS

International Women’s Day Proclamation

Dena Traina Reporting

The City of Merced presented a group of women a proclamation for International Women’s Day. Dena Traina and Susan Walsh went to accept the award on behalf of the American Association of University Women <https://cityofmerced.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=1139611&GUID=B619164E-7E0F-4123-9519-3D47E279E340&Options=info|&Search=#>



Knitting and Crocheting

The knitting and crocheting group, also known as the Knitwits and Hookers, held a surprise “shower” for Jan Mendenhall to celebrate her upcoming grandchild. As of the newsletter, the little one is still in the oven cooking.



MEMBER NEWS

Many of you know but for those who do not, one of our program committee members, Jane Lawrence, had a stroke in March. The good news is that she is doing well and is recovering. For those of you that might want to do something for her family, Carol Hamm has a meal train going. Please contact Carol for details.





Gov Trek

The eclipse happened. We might have missed it because we were typing this. If you're an umbraphile, you might not have. But we hope you didn't miss watching the Gov Trek finale and the tough competition among five teams who created videos of simulated election campaigns.



These high school girls committed seven (yes, SEVEN) Saturdays to explore careers in public service. We can't even get to Yoga that often. Prepare to be amazed [HERE](#). It is not necessary to wear special glasses.

Note from editor: I watched these videos and they are amazing. It is instances like these that I feel there is hope. Go Girl Power!

New AAUW Notecards



I'm thrilled to let you know that this year's exclusive AAUW notecards will be arriving in your mailbox very soon. These beautiful cards were created and curated by our talented members, and I can't wait for you to see them. Here's a quick look at one of the cards, featuring "Exuberance," a painting by Janice Lee, a new AAUW member. This is how she envisions AAUW's vision of inspiring all women and girls. While you wait for your

notecards, [would you consider making a gift](#) to support AAUW's important work? Every dollar supports the development of a community standing strong for gender equity.

Dorothy, an active member, said, "Joining AAUW gives you a sense of community, resources, intergenerational mentoring, purpose, and a chance to advance women through education."

Your support makes a real difference in the lives of women and girls like Dorothy looking to mentor, inspire, and uplift other women.

Make Your Voice Heard

[It's My Vote!: AAUW Priorities in the 2024 Election](#)

Wednesday, April 17, 7 p.m. ET

As part of our It's My Vote! 2024 voter engagement campaign, join us for a deep dive on the policy issues at stake in this year's national elections, including pay equity, equity in education, reproductive rights, and the ERA. Learn how AAUW members can engage in local voter education efforts.

REGISTER NOW



OUR SUPPORTERS

Please join CASA and Kids Discovery Station by placing your ad here!



MERCED COUNTY





Renewal 2024-25
(Deadline June 30, 2024)

Please complete and submit the entire form (even if you are an honorary life member) and return with your dues. This is necessary to ensure that you are listed accurately with National, in the directory and on newsletter mailings.

Make your check payable to Merced AAUW and mail to:

Dee Near, 1004 Half Dome Court, Merced, CA 95340

Please note: Failure to renew will exclude you from section participation in 2023-24.

MEMBER INFORMATION

Name: _____

Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial

Address: _____

Street

City

ZIP

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____

Is your contact information listed in the AAUW Directory?

YES ___ NO ___

Please note corrections below.

_____ My contact information is not in the Directory. Please include as listed.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

_____ Regular Branch Member \$105
(Assoc. \$72 (\$69 is tax deductible)
State \$20, Branch \$13

_____ Honorary Life Member \$0
_____ Association Life member \$33
(Assoc. \$0, State \$20, Branch \$13)

Late Fee \$2 (after July 1)

Donations to AAUW Merced Branch (voluntary)

Scholarship \$ _____ Science Camp \$ _____ Other (Please specify) _____

TOTAL Included \$ _____ Check number _____ Date _____