

VOLUME: 54 NO: 10

## UPCOMING AAUW EVENTS

02 / 22 : DAYTIME BOOK  
GROUP

02 / 25 : EVENING BOOK  
GROUP

03 / 06 : COFFEE & CHAT

03 / 13 : WOMEN'S HISTORY  
PRESENTATION

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1 : COVERPAGE

2 : CO-PRESIDENT'S  
PERSPECTIVE

3 : SPECIAL INTEREST  
GROUPS

4 : SPECIAL INTEREST  
GROUPS

5 : TECH TREK

6 : LATINO YOUTH  
LEADERSHIP / VIRTUAL  
SOCIAL JUSTICE EVENT

7 : WOMEN'S HISTORY  
MONTH

8 : #ITOobelong



## CO-PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE - PEGGY BUCKLES



Because of Covid-19, I have been feeling that there are so many things that are out of my control lately. It's not the way I like my life to go. So, I have decided I need to take a deep breath and control what I can and not beat myself up over what is beyond my control. I'm also working on being more thankful for the little things.

Betty and I sit on the Board of AAUW InterBranch Council. This is composed of the President and Public Policy chairperson from the Camarillo, Simi, and Thousand Oaks branches of AAUW. Each branch takes on a job for this Council. This year I am the Treasurer.

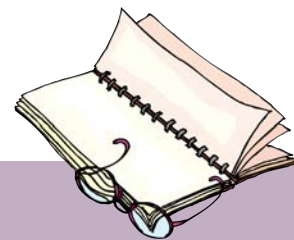
I have been to the bank twice to try to add my name to the checking account without success. This week Betty and I met with the manager of Wells Fargo and he gave us really explicit instructions on the paperwork we need in order to add my name. I am so grateful that we may actually get the issue solved. I'm also grateful that Betty is already on the account so that she could sign the check for Food Share Ventura County. This money is from the fundraiser that our Public Policy chair, Anne LaFianza, ran. With the help of all of the members of our branches, we were able to raise \$2,200 to help feed the people in our county who don't have enough to eat. Thank you to Anne for her leadership and to all of the members who bought items to help in this endeavor. You are greatly appreciated.

I also want to thank all of our members who contributed toys for the children at Westminster Free Clinic's holiday toy drive. This was also run by Anne LaFianza and with your generosity, several hundred children received a new toy. Thank you for all you do!

Though we still can't get together in person, I'm grateful that we have Zoom meetings and can stay in touch that way. I learn something new every time we meet and I'm grateful for those people who help me out along the way.

I'm also grateful that there are finally vaccines becoming available and we may soon see an end to the quarantine. It's been nearly a year and I know many of us rarely get out of the house. More and more of my friends are getting appointments for the vaccination and that makes me very grateful. Even though there is still much that is beyond my control, I'm finding many things I can take charge of and that gives me hope for a brighter future. I hope you are feeling more hopeful in this new season, too.

# SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



**THE DAYTIME BOOK GROUP** meets at 10:00 AM via Zoom. Please contact Joan Udani for any questions [joanudani@hotmail.com](mailto:joanudani@hotmail.com)

**FEBRUARY 22** *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict reviewer Claudia Spelman.

**MARCH 22** *Orange is the New Black* by Piper Kerman reviewer Jean Maxwell.

**APRIL 26** *This Tender Land* by Kent Krueger reviewer Betty Stapleford.

**MAY 24** *Next Year in Havana* by Chanel Cleeton reviewer Wendy Hoffman.

**JUNE 28** *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett reviewer Pat O'Donnell



**THE EVENING BOOK GROUP** meets at 7:00 PM via Zoom. Please contact Sharon Dyer for any questions [jcreationsbysharon@prodigy.net](mailto:jcreationsbysharon@prodigy.net) / 818-991-0689

**FEBRUARY 25** *Ten Green Bottles* by Vivian Jeanette Kaplan (Hostess to be determined)

The books for the next three months have not yet been picked.



## COFFEE AND CHAT



Its time for Coffee and Chat again via Zoom from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM. In recent months we have been choosing themes for discussion after our check-in time. The March topic is a discussion of the ways we can have a positive effect on the lives of the diverse population in our community and beyond

Contact Betty Stapleford at [bstaple4d@gmail.com](mailto:bstaple4d@gmail.com) for an invitation.

When: Saturday, March 6th 2021, Saturday, April 3rd 2021, Saturday, May 1st 2021.



## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### UNITY BOOK GROUP

All are invited to join this thought provoking group for our discussions which are about interesting and unique books, mostly with a multi-cultural or diversity type theme or author. We will be reading for March 10 (Wednesday) *Song of the Captive Bird* by Jasmin Darznik.

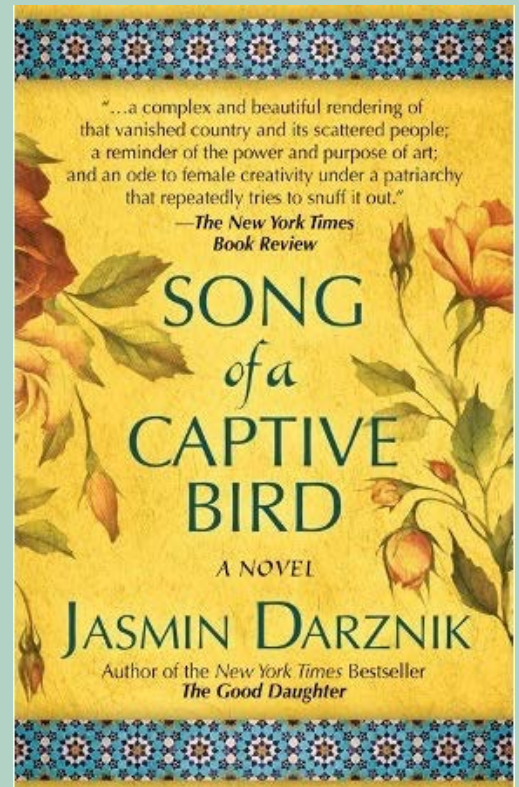
Here's a brief excerpt from the Good Reads review to tantalize you:

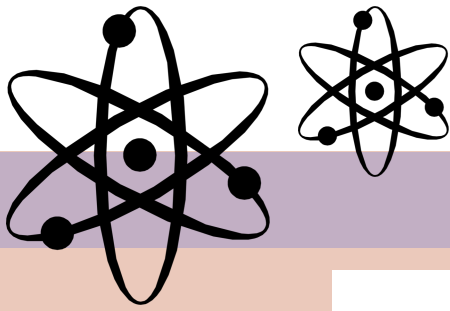
"All through her childhood in Tehran, Forugh is told that Iranian daughters should be quiet and modest. She is taught only to obey, but she always finds ways to rebel—gossiping with her sister among the fragrant roses of her mother's walled garden, venturing to the forbidden rooftop to roughhouse with her three brothers, writing poems to impress her strict, disapproving father, and sneaking out to flirt with a teenage paramour over café glacé. It's during the summer of 1950 that Forugh's passion for poetry really takes flight—and that tradition seeks to clip her wings.

Forced into a suffocating marriage, Forugh runs away and falls into an affair that fuels her desire to write and to achieve freedom and independence. Forugh's poems are considered both scandalous and brilliant; she is heralded by some as a national treasure, vilified by others as a demon influenced by the West. She perseveres, finding love with a notorious filmmaker and living by her own rules—at enormous cost. But the power of her writing grows only stronger amid the upheaval of the Iranian revolution.

Inspired by Forugh Farrokhzad's verse, letters, films, and interviews—and including original translations of her poems—Jasmin Darznik has written a haunting novel, using the lens of fiction to capture the tenacity, spirit, and conflicting desires of a brave woman who represents the birth of feminism in Iran—and who continues to inspire generations of women around the world.

Our meeting will be on Wednesday March 10 at 2pm...note day change from Thursdays. Please contact Sally Hibbits or Shoshana Brower for more information or to be added to the Zoom invite for the next meeting.





# TECH TREK



## Tech Trek 2021 Virtual STEM Camp

This is an exciting time for Tech Trek as AAUW CA has created an all Virtual STEM Camp experience for our campers this coming summer! The focus of the camp is on Robotics, however the curriculum will also include additional STEM topics. In addition, there will be opportunities for the campers to interact with professional scientists and other women in STEM careers.

After much discussion and planning along with a pilot of the camp last summer in San Diego, the 2021 Tech Trek Camp will proceed, but as an all virtual or remote format. Unfortunately, due to the Covid restrictions the AAUW Leadership is unable to provide for on-site Tech Trek. However, this all new virtual camp should be fun and exciting in a new and different way! Also, Thousand Oaks AAUW Branch will be able to provide full campership funding for eight girls to attend this camp. All 2020 Tech Trek applicants from last year are eligible to attend the new 2021 Virtual Tech Trek. Currently, we are evaluating the interest level of these girls.

After determining which local girls will attend this camp, we will be taking the next steps to guarantee that they all have a fun and enriching summer experience. The campers will each have robotics kits to use from Qual-Com Corporation and they will be working in virtual teams involving other girls across the state.

If you are interested in possibly volunteering your time as a Virtual Team Build Coach or Social Coach, please contact Sally Hibbitts immediately. There are openings in the three different camp sessions and your help is always appreciated!



Our AAUW-sponsored group at Thousand Oaks High School continues to be active with bi-monthly meetings on Zoom that are planned by their student leaders. We have had guest speakers, video presentations, small group discussions, leadership opportunities, community building, social activities, and mentorship. In the last months of the school year, we will be including vocational exploration, public speaking, and college presentations. If you are interested in working with this group for the 2021-22 school year, please contact Betty Stapleford, Sally Hibbitts, or Sandra Martinez.



## VIRTUAL SOCIAL JUSTICE EVENT

If you attended our Fall membership meeting, you know that we had a program where two young professional women of color both enlightened and challenged us to look at the effects of racism in our county through the lenses of their education and life experience. The impact of that presentation caused many of our members to think about how we, as part of AAUW, could dig deeper into the ways to uphold the mission and values of our organization and make a difference in our community.

The result was an invitation by Sally Hibbitts to Dr. Lisa Miller, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services at CVUSD, to offer a program to our members and others about the causes and effects of racism in our country and our county. And we are glad that Dr. Miller accepted the invitation to speak and answer questions for us. That program, “Entering Equity Focused Conversations About Race and Racism” was offered to a number of concerned people. Dr. Miller talked about our country’s history and vocabulary around racism and the effects on our residents of color in the areas of education, housing, law, and everyday life. It was a very eye-opening and stimulating presentation, and Dr. Miller welcomed and answered questions from the audience with an impressive depth of knowledge, candor, and respect.

So, what do we do now? A number of members have suggested a variety of ideas - small discussion groups, further education and study, engagement in actions for justice, increased legislative impact, and many other possibilities. What we don’t want to do is ignore the situation and go back to business as usual. But if you want to be a part of our next steps, please let your board know your ideas. We want to hear from you.

# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



## 2021 Women's History Virtual Presentation

Saturday, March 13, 2021

3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

*Please join us as we celebrate Women's History Month!*

### First Person Monologues

of the notable women pictured below  
will be presented, in part or in full, by 6th-8th grade students  
from One Spark Academy in Thousand Oaks.

*followed by a*

### Screening of the Video "Without a Whisper"

Discover the hidden history of the profound influence Indigenous women  
had on the beginnings of the women's rights movement in the United States.



**Sojourner Truth**  
(1797 - 1883)  
Abolitionist

**Patsy Mink**  
(1927 - 2002)  
U.S. Congresswoman,  
Co-Author Title IX



**Jane Addams**  
(1860 - 1935)  
Social Worker, Nobel  
Peace Prize Recipient

**Maya Angelou**  
(1928 - 2014)  
Writer, Lecturer



**Ida B. Wells**  
(1862 - 1931)  
Anti-lynching Crusader,  
Journalist

**Dolores Huerta**  
(1930 - )  
Political Activist,  
Union Organizer



**Shirley Chisholm**  
(1924 - 2005)  
Politician, Educator

**Wilma Mankiller**  
(1945 - 2010)  
Chief of the  
Cherokee Nation





## #ITOOBELONG

If you live in America and are a person of color, you are more likely to experience or have experienced racial inequality. Whether this may be covert racism or something more subtle, it is still wrong. White liberals/progressives are usually proud of their egalitarian values, but many do not realize their own subconscious prejudices.

At a time in America where African American individuals such as George Floyd and Breonna Taylor are senselessly murdered on our streets to the horrific living conditions in immigration detention centers, we cannot be silent any longer. We can no longer tiptoe around the issue of race. It is time to be open and honest about our experiences, as a proud American person of color, in order to benefit us all. This is why we need your help.

Storytelling has been a great way to inform and educate those around us and AAUW TO wants to know your story. Your story may be as simple as someone looking at you with disgust due to you speaking your native tongue, or someone asking you “to go back to where you came from” or being called a racial slur, we at the Oak Twig would be honored to hear it and publish it.

Below are the guidelines:

1. Your article may range from a paragraph to a page.
2. An incident you experienced or witnessed and/or how it made you feel. We'd prefer local experiences, but elsewhere is ok too.
3. You can choose to remain anonymous or include your name. (it is your choice).
4. Please submit to [aauwoactwig@gmail.com](mailto:aauwoactwig@gmail.com)

If you have any questions, please contact  
Sally Hibbitts at [sjhibbitts@aol.com](mailto:sjhibbitts@aol.com) or  
Melanie Weerasinghe  
[aauwoactwig@gmail.com](mailto:aauwoactwig@gmail.com)