

The Oak Twig



SPRING 2023





THE 1619 PROJECT



The Community Room at the Thousand Oaks Library was packed with a standing room only crowd of members and community folks on Sunday February 5 at the kick-off talk for our six month project based upon the work called The 1619 Project. Dr Greg Freeland, CLU Professor Emeritus and long time friend of AAUW TO, gave a fascinating session giving the audience a sneak peek into the lengthy work.

The gasps were very audible when he presented the original “ Tutti Frutti” sung by Little Richard followed by the white-washed version sung by Pat Boone! This one example shows why it’s important for all people to know and understand all of our American History, not just parts that have become accepted by the main stream.

Special thanks to our partners in this terrific program: Jennifer Patterson at The Thousand Oaks Library and our own new member, Rossanna Guerra, from The Friends of the Library. Plus DEI Chair, Cindy Speakman carried the load of putting the 70+ names into the facilitated reading groups too!

For more information please contact Cindy at: cindyspeakman@gmail.com



The Community Room at the Thousand Oaks Library



Dr. Greg Freeland, Professor Emeritus, CLU



Library Director, Jennifer Patterson & Sally Hibbitts



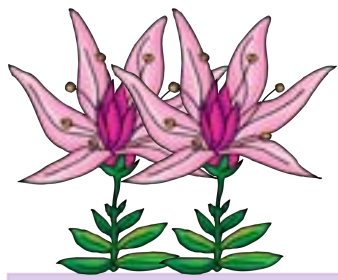


AAUW T.O WALKS AGAINST HATE



It was a tremendous community activity on Sunday, February 26 at the Conejo Creek Park... lots of folks showing their united support at the Walk Against Hate, sponsored by the ADL. There were many tables to visit, lots to see and hear, including a rally, Diversity Festival, walk, speakers etc! Seeing old friends and meeting new is always a good way to spend an afternoon. Our AAUW table was mostly held down by Melanie Weerasinghe. Special thanks also to AAUW Member Sandra Martinez for helping organize the Latino Youth Leadership Group students from TOHS. Our DEI Committee chair, Cindy Speakman helped coordinate our group.





NEW MEMBER: LILLI CLOUD



Bio:

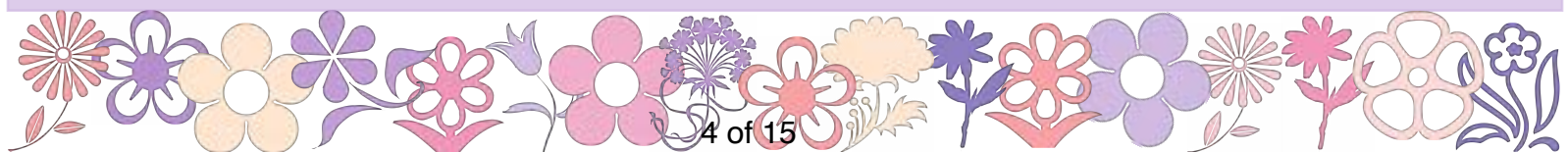
I moved from Los Angeles to Thousand Oaks in March 2020. It has been great to be among the mountains and trails during COVID, but I'm now hungry to set down roots with actual people and find local community. There's nothing I love more than a group of women dedicated to changing the world, so I'm excited about joining you all in AAUW.

I'm a professional communicator with a degree in journalism, with extensive experience in corporate communications, presentation coaching and media training. I also do professional branding and am passionate about supporting women in branding and positioning themselves to gain a job and salary worthy of their talents. I'm in the process of becoming a certified meditation coach, and am also enrolled in the Inner MBA, a conscious leadership training program.

I'm a former board member of All Saints Church Pasadena, which is internationally recognized for its commitment to social justice. I'm also passionate about media literacy. I live in Newbury Park with my partner, Vaughan, and our pandemic pup, Joy.

Warm regards,

Lilli Cloud





SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



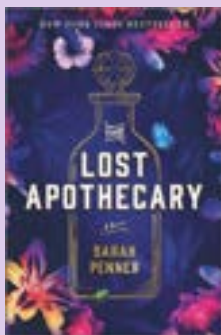
UNITY AND DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

The Branch Unity and Diversity Book Group, will meet next via Zoom on **Thursday, March 16 at 7 PM.** This meeting time has been set so others, who work during the day, might be able to join in our discussion.

The book for the March 16 meeting is *The Lost Apothecary Shop* by Sarah Penner which according to a recent review is about:

“...the story of two women who are working to find their own way in the world. In the late eighteenth century, we meet Nella, the titular apothecary. She’s infamous in London as the place to go when you’re a woman wronged - she’ll help you quickly dispose of a troublesome man in your life. In modern times, we spend our time with Caroline, who has come to London alone on what was supposed to be an anniversary trip — don’t worry, we figure out why in the course of the novel — and get to go down the rabbit hole with her after she starts research on a mysterious glass bottle found in the Thames. Of course, the mysterious glass bottle is connected to Nella, and figuring out how and why it ended up at the bottom of the river is what takes us through both stories.”

This is an exciting and mysterious read which will provide quite a bit of great discussion! To be included in the Zoom invite, please contact Sally Hibbitts sjhibbitts@aol.com





SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



AAUW TO Growing Works Tour & Lunch



Saturday, April 29
11:00AM – 2:00 PM(ish)

Carpool meet up at
CVUSD District Office Parking Lot at 10:30 AM.

Join us for a wonderful Spring Tour of Growing Works the innovative, wholesale California native and drought tolerant plant nursery which provides job training, employment, and horticultural therapy to people with mental health challenges.

Growing Works is based on a sustainable business model where plant sales, job training services, and community support contribute to its great success. Please plan to purchase a few plants too!

RSVP to Peggy Buckles by 4/27
yourmom12345@aol.com

After the tour, we will have lunch at a local restaurant
Growing Works, 1736 So. Lewis Rd., Camarillo
<https://turningpointfoundation.org/growing-works/>





SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



PUBLIC POLICY

The DEI 1619 Project was a huge success. Over 120 people attended, including two City Council members, Bob Engler and David Newman. The library staff were extremely helpful. Thanks to the library director, Jennifer Patterson, employee, Benjamin Salin, and Friends of the Library president, Rossanna Guerra, for partnering with us and publicizing this event.

The Walk Against Hate, sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League, was held on February 26 at Conejo Creek North Park. Thanks to Rossanna, who borrowed a rotating wheel from Friends of the Library, to match up to questions that attendees could answer to win Payday candy bar. A number of AAUW members staffed our table, and DEI and PP committee members were encouraged to attend.

AAUW has been asked to join a low-income housing advocacy group that is forming. Several PP committee members agreed to do this and attend the February 22nd Zoom meeting at 7:00 PM. We will be listed as a sponsoring organization for an area of low-income housing event on March 29 at the T.O. Library. (See flyer.)

City Council follow-up – It was decided that we need to show up in person at City Council meetings more often and encourage them to hire a DEI person. Melanie Weerasinghe attended a second DEI meeting held by the city but reported that there was very little action that was planned. We are committed to continue our advocacy

CVUSD School Board – Members have been watching their meetings. And, although they now appear to be fairly calm with innocuous comments, the PP Committee will continue to monitor school board meetings. Peggy Buckles emailed their meeting schedules to the Public Policy Committee.





SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



Peggy reported that Congressman Eric Swalwell of California is asking people who have been threatened by far-right extremists to testify before a Congressional Committee. She agreed to give his office CVUSD Superintendent Mark McLaughlin's name as he received a death threat. The committee strongly agreed.

Diane Birchman was asked if National had done anything about our gun violence resolution. She was not hopeful that they would do anything further to strengthen our policies and were not planning to ask for input from local branches. Sally Hibbitts sent an email to National expressing her dissatisfaction with their policy change process. And we need to bring this issue up at the State Convention in April.

CRPD has now changed to voting by districts. And Betty Stapleford noted that Sally and Rossanna had attended these meetings and had been successful at getting the CRPD Board to vote for the formation of the districts we thought most equitable.

If you are interest in serving on the Public Policy Committee, please contact Betty Stapleford at bstaple4d@gmail.com.

COFFEE & CHAT

April 01st, 2023: 9:30AM to 11:00AM

May 06th, 2023: 9:30AM to 11:00AM

June 03rd, 2023: 9:30AM to 11:00AM

For a zoom invitation, please contact Betty Stapleford at bstaple4d@gmail.com





MARCH 14TH - EQUAL PAY DAY



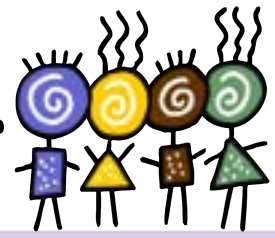
March 14 is Equal Pay Day 2023

This symbolic day denotes how far into the year women must work to be paid what men were paid the previous year. Equal Pay Day 2023 is on March 14 to represent the current state of the gender pay gap: 84% for full-time workers and 77% for all workers (including part-time and seasonal).





LATINO YOUTH LEADERSHIP GROUP



Twice a month the AAUW TO co-sponsored Latino Youth Leadership Group meets after school in the classroom of Branch Member Sandra Martínez at TOHS. Each meeting has a focus on a different topic and often there are special visitors, like Dr. Leo Grimaldi from Amgen, who came in early February to describe his personal story. City Council member, David Newman visited in late February to encourage student participation in the Walk Against Hate on February 26.

Additional focus this spring will be on the Latino Scholarship Dance on April 6 (evening) and the Future Latino Lancers Conference on April 25 or 26 (day). Chaperones and help are needed for both events. In addition drinks, snacks and cookies are needed for the conference too.

Please contact Sandra Martinez at smartdgo2008@gmail.com or Sally Hibbitts at sjhibbitts@aol.com or Betty Stapleford at bstaple4d@gmail.com to help out with this amazing group of students!

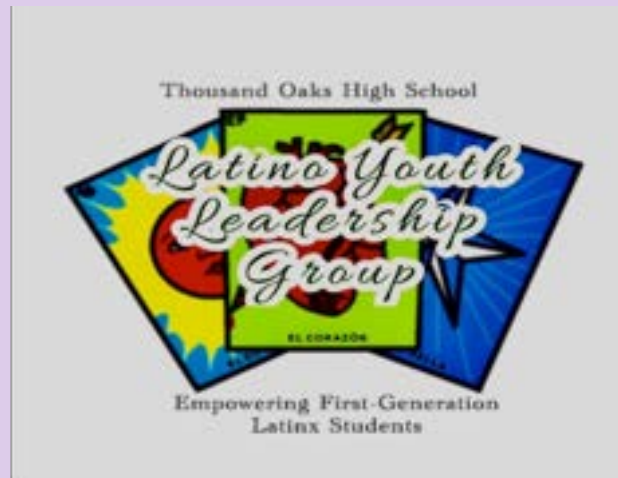


Pictures on the left: Dr Leo Grimaldo

Pictures on the right: Thousand Oaks City Council Member David Newman



LATINO YOUTH LEADERSHIP GROUP NEEDS HELPERS!



For our after school meetings the teens in the Latino Youth Leadership Group are hungry for an after school snack. Thank you very much to the many members who have repeatedly showed their support by doing this and we have several remaining dates to be filled this school year. Here are the dates needed and the link to help us out. On the Sign-up Genius page, the full directions and needed items are explained. Please contact Sally Hibbitts if you have any questions at sjhibbitts@aol.com Thank you!

03/21/2023 3:15pm-5:00pm Tuesday	TOHS in room I-8	Snack Volunteer 1 of 2 slots filled	Sign Up Rossanna Guerra
04/04/2023 3:15pm-5:00pm Tuesday	TOHS in room I-8	Snack Volunteer 2 slots available	Sign Up
04/18/2023 3:15pm-5:00pm Tuesday	TOHS in room I-8	Snack Volunteer 2 slots available	Sign Up
05/02/2023 3:15pm-5:00pm Tuesday	TOHS in room I-8	Snack Volunteer 2 slots available	Sign Up
05/16/2023 3:15pm-5:00pm Tuesday	TOHS in room I-8	Snack Volunteer 2 slots available End of the year party!!	Sign Up

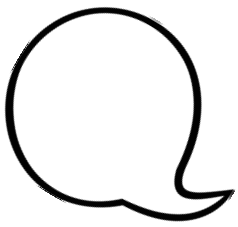
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e084caaad2ba5fc1-aauw#/>





IBC LUNCHEON





SPEECH TREK



After months of hard work by volunteers and students, Speech Trek took place on February 25, 2023 in the Wild Lilac Room at the Goebel Adult Community Center. Three students, Ella Kye (Thousand Oaks High School), Aliyah Ahumada (La Reina HS), and Abril Cedeno (Thousand Oaks HS), gave their speeches on the topic, “How can communities, organizations, and citizens of all ages help protect and expand voting rights?”. Judges Tammie Helmuth, Sharri Lear, and Bonnie Shubb listened intently as Marcine Solarez timed their speeches and Forrest Huff recorded them.

Many others made this event possible. I want to thank the coaches: Marcine Solarez, Lilli Cloud, and David Birchman. The work of contacting the high schools to promote Speech Trek was done by the following people: Betty Stapleford, Marcine Solarez, Cindy Goldberg, Sally Hibbits, Peggy Buckles, and Rossanna Guerra. The principals, district personnel, and school personnel who were extremely helpful were as follows: Dr. Eric Bergmann, Erin Ware, Dr. Brian Mercer, Derek Grimes, Jill Magnante, Carly Adams, Mr. Coull, Marilyn Strange, Lesly Nedwick, Steve Lepire, Matt Conrad, Jason Branham, and Christy Shields-plus many more of whom I may not be aware. Our greeters, Sharon Dyer and Melanie Ashen, were essential in directing people to the Wild Lilac Room and having people sign in. Sharon Dyer also sacrificed hearing the speeches to be with the students who were waiting in the hallway while the student who was speaking gave her speech.



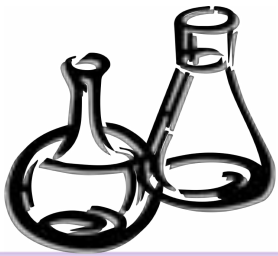
SPEECH TREK

If you would like to hear these speeches, please send an email to aauspeechtrekto@gmail.com and I will forward them to you.

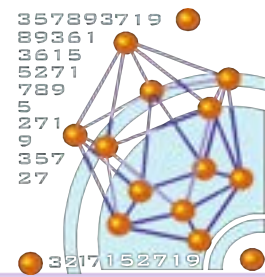
Suggestions for next year's topic may be sent to Marlene Cain at speechtrek@aauw-ca.org. Please do so prior to August 2023.

Please volunteer to assist with Speech Trek in 2024. Send your intent and contact information to aauspeechtrekto@gmail.com or call or text (310) 809-0926.





TECH TREK



During March and April, the Thousand Oaks Branch Tech Trek Committee is continuing its task to select the best girls for the summer STEM camp programs. This work will include a review all of the twenty one applications, including scoring the essays and also conduct in-person interviews. It's a long process for these girls, but our eight 2023 Tech Trekkers will be selected by April 15.

This summer, we will have six girls attend the in-person STEM camp at UCSB and two girls attend the Virtual Camp. These sessions will occur later in July. All of these students were nominated by their STEM teachers at the respective CVUSD middle school.

Our Branch is very lucky to have a large number of generous donors to our Special Projects Fund, which is set aside just for this amazing week long camp experience for grade 7 girls. Thank to all who continue to finically support these very worthwhile endeavors. All donations , both large and small, help send provide the amazing Tech Trek experience for these students.

This year, AAUW CA has adopted a new software platform for use in all aspects of Tevh Trek. It's a very complicated platform, however it ultimately will provide an impressive quantity of data, which will best serve our camps. For our branch committee members, the software is challenging but Important for us to use.

Another big change this year is the creative new Tech Trek logo illustrated here. As you can see it truly captures the essence of Tech Trek...don't overlook the image of the young woman in the middle of the beaker!

Also, we are planning a day trip to UCSB to observe Tech Trek in action. It will occur in late July and we will stop for lunch in Santa Barbara! If interested, please contact Sally Hibbitts at sjhibbitts@aol.com The date and time are TBD.

