AAUW Delta Steamer
News and Events from AAUW Stockton Branch, Inc.
Volume 62 No. 2 Oct. 2026

Joint Meeting of AAUW, League of Women Voters and O'Connor Woods Residents

Saturday, Oct. 10th, 2026 – 9:30am

O'Connor Woods West Hall - 3400 Wagner Heights Rd.

With the midterm elections coming up on November 3rd, it's important to be an informed voter. Californians will be asked to vote on 14 statewide ballot propositions. Representatives from League of Women Voters San Joaquin County will take us through the pros and cons of each. Don't miss this opportunity to better understand the implications of all of the propositions before you mark your ballot.

When: Saturday, Oct. 10th, 9:30am

Where: O'Connor Woods West Hall
3400 Wagner Heights Road, Stockton

Cost: No Charge for this Joint Meeting.
Bring a Friend!

Reservation Deadline: Sunday, Oct. 4th

Connect with your caller or call/text Reservation Chair
Betty Parsons @ (408) 309-8958
bjpars_95120@yahoo.com

A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID

President's Message

AAUW
RESEARCH. EDUCATION. ADVOCACY.

It has been a busy time for our genius of a president, who has decided, probably in a moment of French fried frenzy, that parts of Washington, D.C., needed a makeover. To accomplish this, Trump mandated changes to some of the sites.

Firstly, and the most dismal failure of the renovations, was what happened with the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. The pool was first drained in April after Trump announced plans to repair leaks and color the pool "American Flag Blue." The update was supposed to cost $1.5 million, but the price ballooned to $20 million. The makeover was a disaster when the pool became overgrown with algae, and the water became murky and green. Trump blamed the green water first on vandalism and then on "years of neglect by previous administrations." Apparently, this, too, was Obama's fault.

In July, Trump issued an executive order to have a sign placed in front of the Smithsonian Institution that read: "Warning: the exhibits in this museum were prepared by people who don't want you to love your country." He argued the materials that cast America in a "negative light" have no place in a federal cultural institution. This appears to be a blatant attempt to whitewash our history. Details about Trump's impeachments were removed. Trump also accused the Institution's Board of still implementing the "improper ideology" of DEI, which he deemed to be violations of the Federal antidiscrimination laws.

Most recently, we have Trump's desire to build a 250-foot arch in the capital to "celebrate the 250th anniversary of American independence and would symbolize national strength." Veterans' groups and others have filed lawsuits to stop the arch because the location would detract from the solemnity of Arlington Cemetery and would also dwarf the Lincoln Memorial, both of which would be near the proposed location of the arch. Critics call this monstrosity the "Arch de Trump."

Of course, there is also the grotesque ballroom, the destruction of the East Wing and of Jacqueline Kennedy's rose garden, etc. What troubles me most is that Republicans, once again, do nothing to stop it.

BE SURE TO VOTE ON NOVEMBER 3rd!

Sandra Mazzuola,
President

2026-2027
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Volunteers Needed
for "Thanks for Giving" Tea

Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 7th, 2026 for the Fourth Annual "Thanks for Giving" Tea and Silent Auction. It takes many people to put on an event of this size. People who enjoy cooking are needed to make Cucumber Sandwiches, Curry Chicken Croissants, Ham and Cheddar Sandwiches, Chili Relleno Torta, Spinach Squares, Samosas, Magic Cookie Bars, Pumpkin Bread, Lemon Posset, Mini Cupcakes (Fairy Cakes), Mini Chocolate Eclairs and Thumbprint Cookies. People are also needed to help set up on Friday, November 6th and clean up after the tea. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Claudia Mennuti at cmennuti@comcast.net or (209) 603-7190.



Donations Needed
for Silent Auction

The Silent Auction Committee is looking for donations including gift cards from local stores, restaurants, hair and nail salons, or food-themed baskets, movie/concert/sports tickets, home items, or anything else of your choice. Ask for a donation the next time you go shopping or at an event. In a recent email from Ronda Sanders, attached was a letter that can be used to give to a merchant to secure a donation. All branch interest groups are also being asked to donate a gift basket, or other items that could be auctioned off. Any donation would be useful as it could go towards creating a basket or more valuable bid item.

This year we are again looking for experiences for the auction. Could you donate your time by donating any of the following? Can you teach knitting, crocheting, or needlepoint, bake holiday cookies, make holiday hors d' oeuvres, give cooking lessons, create a charcuterie board, host a dinner party for guests at your home, offer a weekend at your summer house, provide a photography tutorial, give painting or drawing lessons, or anything else that you can imagine.

For questions or to donate, contact Betty Parsons bjpars_95120@yahoo.com
(c) (408) 309-8958
or Joan Erreca recaj2@comcast.net
(c) (209) 471-7909

Donations are needed no later than October 10th—the monthly branch meeting at O'Connor Woods. This is necessary so we can plan accordingly.

Please feel free to bring it with you that morning or let us know if you need it picked up.

Thank you for always supporting your branch in whatever way works for you. Please know that it is always truly appreciated.

✂ Directory Update:

New Member:

Marilyn Draheim
3051 Wagner Heights Rd.
Stockton, CA 95209
Home: (209) 952-8425
Cell: (209) 817-5352
E-Mail: draheim.marilyn.e68@gmail.com
Luther College (Decorah, Iowa)
Interests: TT, Mentor, Book Group, DEI

Please welcome Marilyn to the Stockton Branch

Mentor Program

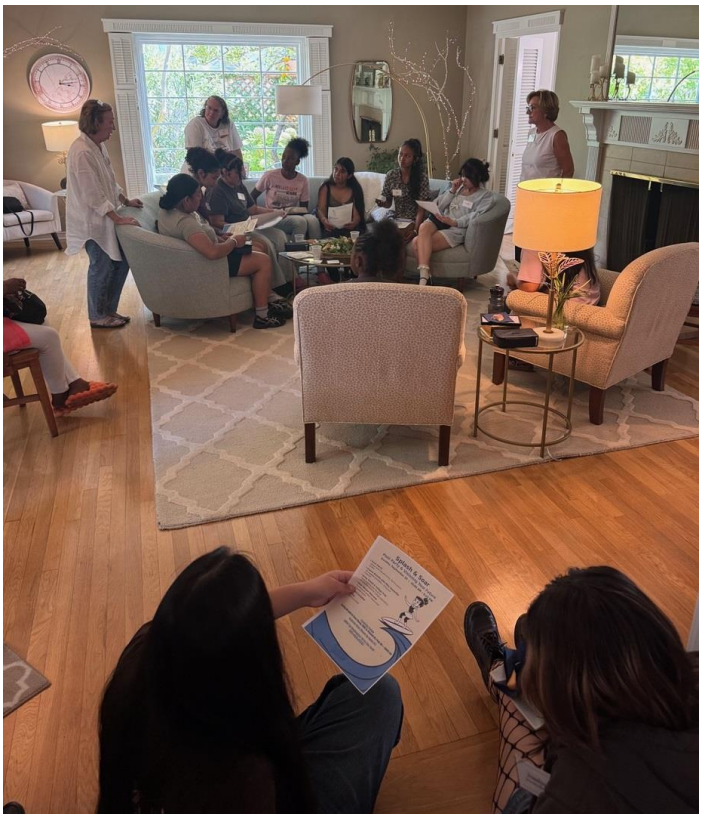


August 23rd, 2026

Welcome Activity

On Sunday, August 23rd, Pam Mallett-Jones welcomed mentors and mentees to her home and introduced our new families as the new year begins. This month, we welcomed new girls and two new mentors into our program. Pam thoughtfully arranged stations at her home to kick off our inspiring "One Word Project," where each girl selects a word to inspire her goals for the year. Krystal, a sophomore, chose "tenacity," while Ramiah, in 8th grade, selected "open-minded." Our seniors stepped into leadership roles by guiding activities that celebrated each girl's chosen word—creating beautiful metal bracelets, drawing and coloring framed images, and crafting charming beaded keychains. The day was relaxed, friendly, and productive, filled with lively chatting, new connections, a sneak peek at upcoming events, and reminiscing with photos from previous years. We're genuinely excited about all the wonderful moments that lie ahead!







Tech Trek by AAUW

Our campers have returned! The three young ladies who attended in-person camp in Fresno were at the September AAUW branch meeting. Each one spoke briefly about the camp experience and thanked the members of Stockton AAUW for providing the experience. The Tech Trek committee would also like to thank all of you who help us send these girls to camp each year. It's a truly special and life-altering experience! All three are joining the mentor group and we expect great things in their futures.



Tech Trek Campers

Public Policy Update

To vote in the upcoming midterm elections, you must be registered to vote by October 19th. You can find AAUW-California's voter guides at: Public Policy - AAUW California

The guides were scheduled to be available online 9/15, however they were not there at the Steamer deadline.

Many of us in the past have been voting by mail & we enjoy that freedom. Because of the administration's attacks on mail-in voting, though, I encourage you this year to either vote in person or at a local secure drop box. While we know our mail system is secure, it will keep your vote from being contested.

Our next branch meeting is a joint meeting with the League of Women Voters where we will evaluate people & issues on the ballot in a nonpartisan fashion. You won't want to miss it!

The School Board Project is being transitioned by AAUW-CA from a state focused project to the branch level. If this is an interest of anyone, there are many resources available, & I would be happy to get you started in this.

Women who have changed their world. Jen Pawol, the first woman to umpire a regular season major league baseball game, August 9, 2025. As a girl growing up on Long Island, Jen wanted to play Little League, but that wasn't what girls in the 1980s did, so she played softball instead. In June 2016 Pawol made her professional umpiring debut in a minor league game. At the time she was the first woman to umpire a minor league game in almost a decade & the seventh woman to ever do it. Her major league debut took nine more years! In the spring of 2024 Pawol umpired her first major league baseball (MLB) spring training game and then the next year did what no woman had done before: umpire a regular-season MLB game.

The rise of women umpires in professional baseball marks one of the sport's most important shifts in modern leadership, visibility, and talent evaluation. An umpire does more than call balls & strikes. They are the on-field official responsible for applying the rulebook in real time, monitoring player conduct, handling appeals, managing game flow, and making judgment calls on balls, strikes, outs, fair balls, and player conduct. For decades, professional baseball treated that authority role as almost exclusively male, even while women steadily expanded their presence across playing, coaching, scouting, analytics, and the front-office. They have faced discrimination, harassment, & had to file lawsuits in order to be on the field. At higher levels of baseball, they also work as a crew, which means communication, positioning, and teamwork are essential. Every game requires constant focus because a single missed mechanic or lapse in concentration can affect a play, an inning, or the tone of the entire contest. The issue is not whether women can umpire; that has been answered repeatedly by performance. The real questions are how the pathway works, why progress has been slow, what barriers remain, and which figures have moved the profession forward.

Bernice Gera (1972) & Christine Wren (1975-77) were the first of female umpires in professional ball. They shortened their names to sound more masculine on their application paperwork. Gera became a landmark figure in the 1970s when she fought in court for the right to umpire professional baseball. Her legal challenge against organized baseball established an early precedent that exclusion could be contested. Although her on-field professional tenure was brief, its significance was lasting: the profession could no longer credibly claim that women simply did not belong.

They reinforce a larger truth across women in baseball: authority roles change culture faster than visibility roles alone. When girls and young women see someone enforce the rules in professional baseball, they see a woman trusted with judgment under pressure. That image supports every adjacent pathway, including coaching, player development, strength and conditioning, analytics, communications, and executive leadership. It tells baseball that women are not guests in baseball spaces; they are decision-makers.



Nationwide Impact of the Harvard DEI Funding Ruling

Overview

A federal court ruled that the U.S. government unlawfully froze and attempted to terminate over $2 billion in Harvard's federal research grants after pressuring the university to dismantle or alter its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs. The court found the government's actions violated the First Amendment, Title VI, and the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). This decision has significant implications for DEI policies, academic freedom, and federal funding nationwide.

Key Findings of the Court

- **First Amendment Protection:** The court held that conditioning federal funding on eliminating or restructuring DEI programs constituted unconstitutional retaliation against protected speech and academic autonomy.
- **Title VI Violations:** Federal agencies failed to follow required procedures before attempting to withdraw funding, making the freeze invalid.
- **APA Violations:** The government acted arbitrarily and capriciously by freezing grants without evidence that doing so would address antisemitism or improve campus climate.

National Implications

1. Limits on Federal Pressure Over DEI Policies

The ruling establishes that federal agencies cannot threaten or withdraw funding to force universities to change DEI programs or adopt specific ideological frameworks. This protects institutions from politically motivated interventions.

2. Strengthened Academic Freedom

Universities nationwide gain reinforced legal protection for:

- DEI offices and programming
- Inclusive hiring and admissions practices
- Curriculum decisions involving race, identity, and equity

The decision signals that academic institutions retain broad discretion over DEI-related initiatives.

3. Constraints on Federal Enforcement Strategies

Agencies must follow strict procedural steps before altering or terminating funding. This limits abrupt or punitive actions and ensures due process.

4. Ripple Effects for Other Universities

Institutions facing similar federal scrutiny—such as Columbia, Brown, and state universities—may rely on this ruling to challenge funding threats or ideological mandates.

5. Stabilization of DEI Infrastructure

The ruling provides reassurance that DEI programs:

- Cannot be dismantled through funding coercion
- Remain legally defensible when tied to academic mission and student support

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What Universities Should Expect Next

- Increased litigation referencing the Harvard precedent
- More cautious federal agency actions involving DEI
- Stronger institutional confidence in maintaining DEI offices, training, and programming

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Summary

The Harvard ruling is a landmark decision affirming that DEI programs are protected under academic freedom and cannot be targeted through retaliatory funding cuts. It sets a nationwide precedent limiting federal overreach and safeguarding universities' ability to pursue diversity, equity, and inclusion as core educational values.

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Vision: AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measureable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.
Mission: **AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education**, **philanthropy and research.**
Value Promise: By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

Oct. Calendar

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location/Contact
Sun	4	All Day	Reservation Deadline	Betty Parsons – (408) 309-8958
Mon	5	6:00pm	Oct. Board Meeting	Online via Zoom
Sat	10	9:30am	AAUW Oct. Program: “AAUW, League of Women Voters and O’Connor Woods Residents”	O’Connor Woods West Hall