

THE VIEW FROM SAN RAMON

Volume 40, Number 2

October 2023



The School Board Project

Overview of AAUW CA Initiative Background, Discussion, and Actions!

Protect honest, inclusive education in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District



The School Board Project, developed by the AAUW CA Public Policy team, is designed to ensure that school boards throughout California include members who are committed to the maintenance of high standards of education for all students, including access to diverse and historically accurate information.

Plan to attend the meeting and learn about the efforts of the San Ramon Valley School District to provide an honest and inclusive education. The meeting is organized by the Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch.

Thursday, October 19; 6:30 PM–8:30 PM

Danville Congregational Church
989 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville

Social time: 6:00 PM–6:30 PM

Meeting starts: 6:30 PM

See pages 4 and 12 for more Information

AAUW MISSION AND DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

American Association of University Women advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

OCTOBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 11:30 AM Lunch Bunch Margo James	4	5	6	7 7:00 PM Game Night Lucy Weed
8	9 1:00 PM Daytime Readers Margo James 7:00 PM Board Meeting via Zoom INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY	10	11	12	13	14 9:00 AM Local Walking Group Lois Kamoroff
15	16 12 noon** Special time Night Book Group Potluck Lunch Cheri Ng	17 7:00 PM Bridge Chris White	18 11:30 AM Women in History Margo James	19 6:00 PM The School Board Project <i>See page 4</i>	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 Fourth Friday Flicks Chris White	28
29	30	31 				

Snippets

If you have a Snippet item (family events, career changes, etc.) that you would like to share with branch members, please contact Carol Lombardi.

Read about the [San Ramon 40th Anniversary Light Parade](#), scheduled for November 4, on the San Ramon City website.

Check out pages 9–10 for four (yes, four) **new** Interest Groups!

Save the Dates

November 16, 2023: Friendsgiving 4:00 PM–6:00 PM

February 5, 2024: Tech Trek Fundraiser at Gianni's

Watch for more information about our 2023–2024 events in future newsletters.

President's Pen



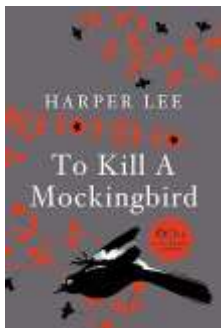
All About October

October is the month that says fall is definitely here. What else do you know about the 10th month? Find out by answering these October Trivia questions (answers are on page 10).

Q1 What is on the 1st Friday of every October?

Q2 As well as Libra, what other star sign could October birthday babies have?

Q3 What happened to Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., on October 14, 1964?



Q4 What year did the American Library Association (ALA) start Banned Book Week (this year held October 1–7)

The Color Purple, To Kill a Mockingbird, Catcher in the Rye, 1984, The Handmaid's Tale, and Looking for Alaska are just a handful of the books on some community's banned book list.

AAUW CA Public Policy Group's

"The School Board Project" has partnered with Equality California to support efforts to combat book banning and curricula censorship.

Attend our October 19th program (information on pages 4 and 12) to learn more about this important topic in our community. Learn more about Banned Book Week [here](#).



Q5 What can you do in October to lower your blood pressure, lengthen your life, and increase your happiness?

Better health, more friends, and a warm feeling that you make a difference are just some of the research-proven benefits of volunteering. Snackable volunteer opportunities are small, fun, easily

accomplished tasks that support our branch. For just a few hours a month, you too can gain volunteer perks galore.

Our branch has several "snackable" volunteer opportunities available right now:

- Branch Coordinator for National FUND (2–3 hours per month)
- Newsletter Editor/Proofreader (1–2 hours per month)
- Operations Ninja (3–4 hours per month)
- Website/social media Support (3–4 hours per month)
- Gov Trek Recruiter (3–5 hours at various times October–January)

Intrigued? [Check our website](#) for more details or contact me to learn more.

Kathleen Schaub, President

Happy October Birthdays!

**Marjorie Goldware
Isabel Lau
Harvalee Grimm**

Happy AAUW Anniversaries!

Fran Bartholomew	45 years
Marielle Boortz	40 years
Lois Kamoroff	35 years

Program

The School Board Project

Protecting Honest, Inclusive Education in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District

Thursday, October 19
6:00 PM: Social time, 6:30 PM: Meeting starts

Danville Congregational Church
989 San Ramon Valley Blvd, Danville

Our next program will be in partnership with the Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch. Look for the Evite and please respond. The focus will be on a new AAUW CA initiative called “The School Board Project,” which is designed to ensure school boards up and down the state include members who are committed to the maintenance of high standards of education for all students – including access to diverse and historically accurate information. More information about this very relevant, important topic can be found [here](#) and in a [webinar](#) presented by AAUW-CA on September 21.

The October meeting will feature a panel moderated by DAW Public Policy Chair Laurinda Ochoa. The panel will focus on the current experience of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) regarding the issue of honest and inclusive education. They will provide context to enrich our understanding and action, including: California education code regarding parental rights and the Board of Education duty to educate; the local PTA’s goals, role, and perspective; the student perspective; and our branch’s historic involvement in advocating for quality public education in SRVUSD.

The following distinguished panel will be featured:

- Shelley Clark, SRVUSD Board trustee, Area 2
- Ravneet Julka, parent of four and attorney
- Lisa Gross, president of 32nd District PTA
- SRVUSD student to be announced
- Leslie Vilhauer, retired teacher, DAW branch member and past president

We look forward to an informative, energizing presentation! Save the date!

In addition to the formal program, there will be 30 minutes at the beginning to Mingle, Munch, and Make a Difference. The presentation and panel discussion will start at 6:30 PM.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the members and guests who attended our September Welcome Event. We heard from four of our Tech Trek campers, who impressed us with their poise and excellent public speaking skills. They shared some of their favorite experiences from camp and seemed very excited to continue their education in STEM. We also congratulated the four Renaissance Scholars on their efforts and achievements. They are so inspirational! They have worked hard to complete their college degrees. It was truly a wonderful event!



SAVE THE DATE: NOVEMBER PROGRAM

What: AAUW San Ramon Friendsgiving
When: November 16, 2023; 4:00 PM–6:00 PM
Where: Bollinger Hills Cabana
2951 Morgan Drive, San Ramon
Kickoff the holiday season with your AAUW friends!
More details to come!

We look forward to seeing you at these upcoming events.

Karen Rice & Cindy Alpert
Co-VPs Program

Tech Trek



We heard from four Tech Trek 2023 campers at the September Welcome event. We were inspired by their stories about camp and their enthusiasm for STEM. Thank you again for supporting this great project!

Each camper attending virtual camp created a short video to explain their projects. Watch them and be impressed!

Nandita: <https://flip.com/s/pUMV6Exay4St>

Isabelle: <https://flip.com/s/wKhEXwPxmJnA>

Saanvi: <https://flip.com/s/b8dmyyJk-ERE>



Our 2023 Tech Trek campers with Cordelia Hwang

A few fun facts about Tech Trek:

- Tech Trek is a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) camp designed to develop interest, excitement, and self-confidence in young women entering eighth grade in the fall.
- In the residential camps, all sleeping, eating, instructional and recreational facilities are located on a university campus where camps are held. Our campers attend Sonoma State University.
- Virtual Camp was added in 2020. With a similar hands-on STEM and social learning focus as the campus-based Tech Trek programs, it provides campers remote access to activities, new friends, virtual field trips, and role models to help foster STEM engagement and interest in STEM studies and careers without ever having to leave home (other than to pick up your camp supplies)!
- California Tech Trek camp was implemented by Marie Wolbach at Stanford in 1998. Our branch has sent campers every year since its inception.
- All camps are run by volunteers, including dorm moms, classroom aides, camp staff, and camp directors.
- Your donations help pay for camp costs.

Our primary branch fundraiser is “Tips for Change,” a Gianni’s restaurant event. **SAVE THE DATE:** February 5, 2024. More details to come!

We appreciate your support and look forward to another successful Tech Trek year!

Cindy Alpert, Tech Trek Chair

Local Scholarship



The Gift Card Email Auction Returns in October and November

This fun event is a win-win for both Local Scholarship and the winning bidder. Since all gift cards are donated and all winning bidders get something in exchange for their participation, everyone is a winner! Last spring we raised \$520 in just two auctions!

Look for an email blast from Carol Lombardi during the first weeks of October and November outlining the gift card(s) or certificate(s) available that month, along with the rules, face value for each, and the ending day and time for the auction. Then, just contact Lorraine Weir with your **BEST AND ONLY** bid and be sure that it is **NO LESS THAN THE FACE VALUE** of the card or certificate up for auction. **EASY!**

The winner will be contacted by Lorraine to arrange delivery of the gift card and payment; the results will appear in the December newsletter. In the event of a tie, the winner will be determined by random drawing by Lorraine.

Again, thank you for your support of Local Scholarship!

Renaissance Scholars Update



L to R: Roshawn Campbell (CSUEB Renaissance Scholars Coordinator), Susan Walker-Christiansen, Ruth Clay, Jessenia Cohen, Ashley Middlebrooks, Felecia Hubbard, Julie Gin, and Thomas Longwood (Renaissance Scholars Outreach Coordinator)

We are so grateful that our branch continues to support the Renaissance Scholars Program at CSUEB. This year we are presenting four \$1,000 scholarships to four very talented and impressive young women. They have demonstrated determination and focus to achieve their academic and personal goals.

Continued next page

Local Scholarship

Each recipient also received a Student Affiliate Membership to AAUW along with a “Back to School” gift basket. I hope that those of you at the Welcome Event had a chance to meet or hear about these exceptional young women.

Following are their brief profiles:

Ruth Clay is a senior this fall and plans to graduate in the spring of 2024 with a major in Sociology and minor in Human Development. She would like to obtain a Master’s Degree in Social Work and hopes to work with youth in the foster care system. She currently works as a Para-Educator for Oakland Unified School District and has been an intern with First Place for Youth, which provides services for youth in the foster care and justice system. Ruth is also a talented artist and musician, playing several instruments and working in different artistic media. Ruth feels that being able to express herself in art and music helps her deal with past emotional experiences. Ruth lives in Oakland and has a son in middle school.

Jessenia Cohen is a senior this fall and plans to graduate in the spring of 2024 with a major in Psychology and a minor in Criminal Justice. She is interested in a career in Forensic Psychology, Behavior Analysis, or Counseling, specifically working with law enforcement. She has worked at a variety of jobs and volunteer positions during her school years: hotel receptionist, personal assistant, community artist, animal care taker, dog walker, assistant to a family member with goats during and after birthing season, etc. Jessenia has a strong interest and skill in working with animals. She attributes some of her interest in the field of Psychology to the help and support that she has received from various therapists.

Felecia Hubbard is a returning scholarship recipient for us and is a senior this fall. She plans to graduate in the spring of 2024 with a major in Human Development and a concentration in Women’s Studies. Felecia grew up in Southern California and has an AA degree in Psychology from El Camino College in Torrance, California. She is interested in becoming a Social Worker or working with youth in a residential setting. For years, Felecia has endured painful health conditions that required several surgeries and prevented her from working regularly. Despite this, she has a positive attitude, and she “has created a healthy lifestyle.” She recounted the many ways that the Renaissance Program has helped her personally and that “Cal State East Bay has saved my life.” Felecia lives in Oakland and has an adult son.

Ashley Middlebrooks is also a senior in the fall. She is majoring in Criminal Justice and would like to work with foster youth or in some area of substance abuse. She has

Local Scholarship

worked full-time for many years and reentered CSUEB in 2021. Ashley previously worked for the YMCA in San Francisco and has worked for John Muir Health in Walnut Creek since 2018 and is currently a full-time Benefits Specialist in the Human Resources Department. She expresses a strong desire to help youth who are experiencing some of the struggles that she did as a child, including poverty, familial drug addiction, and homelessness.

Thank you again to all of our members for your continued support, which enables us to provide financial support and recognition for these deserving young women.



Additional special thanks to members who contributed to the gift baskets. We filled the baskets with gift cards and cash donations, in addition to some specific useful or personal items. Gift card donations from Target, Safeway, Amazon, gas stations, and cash provide them with options for groceries, school/office or household supplies, school expenses, and personal needs. In addition to laundry supplies, the cash and gift cards totaled almost \$800 for each recipient.

Susan Walker-Christensen and Loranne Weir
Local Scholarship Committee

Fund



A New Way to Hear Their Stories!

There’s a change this year in the way we’ll view the amazing stories of our AAUW FUND grant recipients. Instead of the traditional scheduled weekend viewings, we’ll get access to short video recordings (5-8 minutes each) of each of our 24 California fellows and grantees talking about their topics of study. In one click, you’ll be able to watch any or all of them. Expect more information in late October.

Membership



Membership Matters

New Member Spotlights



Leela Gopal was born in India. She and her husband, Mahesh, and their two children live in San Ramon. Their daughter, Adhya, is one of our Tech Trek (TT) 2023 residential campers. Leela joined our branch immediately after attending the TT 2023 Ice Cream Social orientation.

Leela received her degree in clinical nutrition and dietetics at Mysore University in India. She currently works as a tutor in math and reading. She enjoys cooking, reading, and hiking; her most memorable family vacation was a trip to Yellowstone and Mt. Rushmore National Parks.



Cathy Nisen was born in Battle Creek, Michigan. She lives in Danville with her husband Alan ("AJ"); they have two children. Cathy received her Bachelor's degree in Health Science from Chapman University and her diploma in Nursing from Providence School of Nursing in Oakland. She is a retired registered nurse.

Cathy enjoys playing golf, reading, and knitting. She is also well-traveled: She has lived in Germany, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois. Her most memorable adventure was walking on the Great Wall of China. Cathy accompanied Margaret Batesole to the Welcome Event on September 9 and said that she was "inspired" by what she learned and those she met.

Membership

Who You Gonna Call?

Remember it's your **Membership Team** who keeps the directory current, the Evite list updated, thoughtful words sent to members experiencing life events, and invitations sent to guests or prospective members. Just let us know how we can help YOU. We are only a call, text, or email away. Your long-term support and participation are valued!



Your Membership Team:

L to R: Margo James, Betsy Hoffmann, Harvalee Grimm

Public Policy



The AAUW California Public Policy Team has launched a newsletter to provide local branches with important tools to learn about current issues and facilitate member involvement with and contributions to public policy initiatives.

It includes upcoming events, legislative calls to action, and valuable resources. Note that you can sign up to receive Action Alerts about legislation of interest to you. Of particular importance to our branch members are the initiatives around education and gender equality. Check it out at this [link](https://www.aauw-ca.org/documents/2023/09/public-policy-news-september-2023.pdf) or paste this url into your browser: <https://www.aauw-ca.org/documents/2023/09/public-policy-news-september-2023.pdf>

Gov Trek



Leela Gopal has joined Rebecca Said to help spread the word about this vital new program.

Interest Groups

LUNCH BUNCH

First Tuesday

Tuesday, October 3; 11:30 AM

We had a lovely lunch sitting outside at The Roundhouse last week! I have included our picture below. For those of you who aren't familiar with The Roundhouse, it IS open to the public, and has wonderful views of Annabel Lake. The location is particularly lovely this time of year, with the changing leaves reflected in the lake.



Our next lunch will be all about chicken! Lunch Bunch is going to try Plucked Chicken and Beer, 3191D Crow Canyon Place, San Ramon. The place has gotten good reviews for their fried chicken sandwiches and other yummy dishes. It is in the same shopping center as Sprouts and Dos Coyotes, between Dos Coyotes and RiteAid. Hope to see you there!

To join the e-mail reminder list, contact:
Margo James

GAME NIGHT

First Saturday

Saturday, October 7; 7:00 PM

We'll play at home of Diane Griffiths

RSVP to Diane

Questions? Contact Lucy Weed

DAYTIME READERS

Second Monday

Monday, October 9; 1:00–3:00 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Diane Griffiths will review *Cloud Cuckoo Land* by Anthony Doerr. If you have questions or wish to be put on the e-mail list to receive a Zoom invitation, please contact Margo James

Interest Groups

LOCAL WALKING GROUP

Second Saturday

Saturday, October 14; 9:00 AM

We'll walk around Annabel Lake at Bishop Ranch 2600. The walkway is gravel, paved in some areas, and an easy flat terrain. Parking should be easy at the Target parking lot. Everyone is welcome, including your dogs!

RSVP if you would like to be a part of this interest group.

Contact:

Andrée Chagnon

Lois Kamoroff

THE NIGHT BOOK GROUP

Third Monday

Monday, October 16; 12 noon **Special time

Potluck Lunch and Book Selection

Via Zoom videoconference or in person

In a break from tradition, the Night Book Group will meet in person at **noon** to enjoy a potluck lunch and to select the books to read and discuss during the coming year.

Each group member is asked to send the title and author of up to three (3) books to Cheri Ng ahead of the meeting so she can compile the list and send it out to anyone who is interested in participating. Armed with the list and space for taking notes, traditionally, each person “pitches” their choices by telling a bit about the book and/or author.

It may be a book they've heard about or one they've read or picked up because it looked interesting. After the potluck, in-person attendees vote for their top 11 choices. Those who cannot attend can send their top 11 choices to Cheri via email. Cheri compiles the votes, and the top 11 are our books for the year. You can submit any genre—fiction, non-fiction, biography, mystery, classics, etc.

Please get me your choices by October 12 so I have time to type and share the list before the meeting. Once the final 11 titles are chosen, we decide when to read each book. Typically, busy months tend to be shorter or faster reads, and books in hardcover we save for later in the year in hopes they'll come out in softcover or digital mode. Lastly, we need volunteers to review each book each month. This is not a difficult job, as everyone pretty much jumps into the discussion and we are very non-judgmental.

It is perfectly fine to participate in the group even if you have no suggestions...some of us have plenty! If you submit book choices but are unable to attend, let Cheri know a bit about why you are recommending the books so she can include that in the notes section of the list.

Questions? Contact Cheri Ng

Interest Groups

TUESDAY NIGHT BRIDGE

Tuesday, October 17; 7:00–10:00 PM or so

Virtual and/or in person

Hostess: Joy Perkins at Chris White's home

RSVP: Chris White

We will play bridge via Zoom/teleconference and BridgeBase and/or in person.

Please RSVP and let me know:

1. if you are interested in playing or not
2. if you wish to play in person or virtual.

Contact Chris White as soon as possible to let me know if you are playing or not.



~~~~~



### WOMEN IN HISTORY

Wednesday, October 18; 11:30 AM

Women in History will launches!

We are listening to Queen Charlotte Part 1 from The History Chicks podcast:

<https://thehistorychicks.com/?s=229>.

Diane Griffiths will lead the discussion. To receive the Zoom link or to be put on the email list, please contact: Margo James

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FOURTH FRIDAY FLICKS (FFF)

Friday, October 27; 7:30 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Organizer: Diane Griffiths

Film/Series: *Stephen Curry: Underrated*

Available to stream on Apple+

Let Chris White know if you wish to receive a Zoom link for the above event.

We need volunteers to pick a film for the remainder of 2023: 11/24 and 12/22. Please Volunteer!!

Please Contact: Chris White

Interest Groups



LET'S GO!



Do you have a place you'd like to go but would like company? Here is a new group for you!

I plan to start a new Interest Group similar to Daytimers, which we once enjoyed. The focus of Let's Go! will be to suggest and arrange visits to interesting places: a museum, garden, factory, historic house, TV station, etc.

The person who volunteers to organize a trip will figure out the logistics required and share them—through the newsletter and our focused email list—with the group. This would include location, cost, date and hours, carpool arrangements, etc. This group will get together on an irregular basis.

If you are interested in being part of this group, please let me know so I can add you to our focused email list. If you have a location/event that you'd like to visit, please let me know that too! Questions?

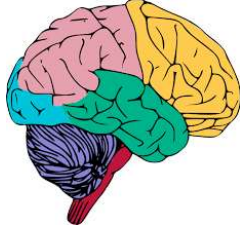
Chris White



Interest Groups



HIDDEN BRAIN PODCAST



Hidden Brain Podcast helps curious people understand the world and themselves. Using science and storytelling, Hidden Brain's host Shankar Vedanta reveals the unconscious patterns that drive human behavior, the biases that shape our choices, and the triggers that direct the course of our relationships. Each week Shankar interviews a different expert who has done research on an interesting topic.

Kathy Senti has been listening to these podcasts for a while now and finds them fascinating. She would love to meet with other people who are interested in human psychology and would like to discuss the various topics.

Kathy will set up a meeting for all interested people to decide when is a good time to meet and how to structure the meetings. She imagines meeting once a month and the group selecting which podcast topic to discuss for each one. (The podcast has an episode each week, so there are many topics to choose from.) We could possibly have a different group member lead each discussion.

If you are interested, please contact Kathy Senti.

Interest Groups



BOCCE



It doesn't matter if you've never played Bocce! Come and participate in this friendly and fun activity. It is NOT physically taxing. Some people play in wheelchairs or wearing oxygen masks.

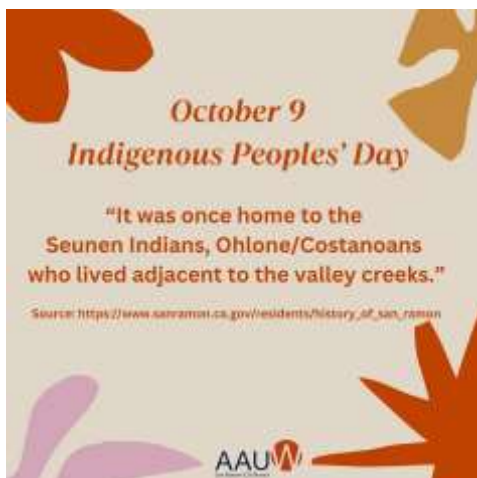
Don't let any limitations get in the way of having a great time. And the rules are easy to learn. We'll have a Zoom meeting with all interested people to decide what day and time would work once a month on a regular basis, where to play, and how long.

We might play for one, possibly two hours. We have four free places to choose from:

1. San Ramon Senior Center on Alcosta Blvd.
2. Annabel Lake in Bishop Ranch (across from Target and Whole Foods)
3. Souyen Park on Watermill Road
4. Ramona Park on Murdock Way.

We could play with 2 people or as many as 16 people (and maybe even more).

If you are interested, please contact Kathy Senti.



October Trivia Answers

- A1 World Smile Day
- A2 Scorpio
- A3 He became the youngest-ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.
- A4 1982
- A5 Volunteer (of course!)

**Thank you to our volunteer editors and proofreaders:
Cathy Nisen, Lucy Weed, Chris White**

2023–2024 Board

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Kathleen Schaub

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Judy Bracken
Nancy Vandell

AAUW San Ramon Information

Websites:

Branch Website: www.sanramon-ca.aauw.net

Webmaster: Isabel Lau

Association website: www.aauw.org

CA State website: www.aauw-ca.org

CCC IBC website: cbc-ibc-ca.aauw.org

Branch mailing address:

P.O. Box 336, San Ramon, CA 94583

Branch email address:

aauwsr@gmail.com

Facebook: San Ramon University Women/AAUW

Instagram: @sanramonaauw

Appointed Officers

ART & WIND FESTIVAL

Janet Williams

COMMUNICATION

Isabel Lau

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Duties have been assumed by Membership

GOV TREK

Rebecca Said
Leela Gopal

HOSPITALITY/FELLOWSHIP

Andrée Chagnon

NEWSLETTER

Isabel Lau
Carol Lombardi

PUBLIC POLICY

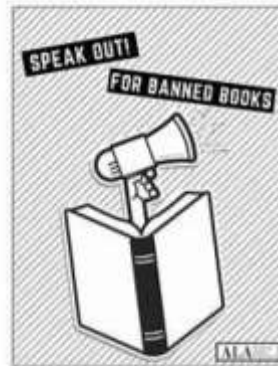
Catherine Lewis

TECH TREK

Cindy Alpert

AAUW California Public Policy "School Board Project"

Contra Costa IBC, August 16, 2023



Issue #1 – Books are Being Banned

Book Bans by the Numbers:

32 states

110 school districts (and counting)

1,648 books

Source: Banned Book List: 1,648 Books in 2021-2022 - PEN America



What are we doing about it?

- Established "The School Board Project" sub-committee within the AAUW California Public Policy Committee to gather data and coordinate efforts
- Collaborating with like-minded organizations to challenge the drive to elect regressive school board members
 - Equality California - <https://www.eqca.org>
 - The School Board Project - <https://www.schoolboardproject.com/>
- Developing scripts and talking points for members' use
- Developing social media materials
- Tracking races and members' efforts



See the complete presentation on our website at <https://sanramon-ca.aauw.net/activities/programs/>