

AAUW-CA Salutes *Bridges to Tomorrow Math – Science Camp* Twenty Years Young

Jan Youngman, Fullerton Branch

“This conference helped me think about different careers and all the options I have,” remarked a 2004 attendee of the *Bridges to Tomorrow Math – Science Conference*. This conference, sponsored by the three AAUW North Orange County branches: Brea/La Habra, Fullerton, and Placentia/Yorba Linda, is celebrating its twentieth year.

Its mission is to expose young women to the diversity of careers requiring math and scientific training. It is also hoped the attendees will recognize the value of taking more math and science courses to enhance their education and career opportunities.

What began as an experiment with 100 young women attending a Saturday conference at UC Irvine has evolved into a half-day weekday conference with 700 to 900 young women from 21 schools moving about the Fullerton College campus. The students first assemble during a keynote address in a large auditorium and then attend three 40-minute workshops. Each workshop has two professional women with different careers. There are a total of 23 workshops with 46 speakers. Based on their registration preferences, the students are assigned workshops; most are able to hear their first choice career speaker.



The conference is organized by a collaboration of the three co-chairs, one from each of the branches. Speaker chairs recruit the 46–50 professional women from such fields as forensics, engineering, finance, industrial design, numerous medical and science careers, law enforcement and architecture. Each branch also has specific tasks that ensure the success of the conference. Approximately 55 AAUW branch volunteers participate as workshop moderators or student guides on the day of the conference. While the students are attending workshops, teachers are invited to the hospitality room where they can network with teachers from other schools and AAUW members. The conference concludes with a luncheon for speakers and volunteers. Many speakers repeat each year.

Fullerton College generously opens its campus during an interim session and provides classrooms and audio-visual equipment for the workshops. This relationship also allows us to obtain low cost printing for our conference brochures and has enabled us to keep our registration at a nominal \$3.00 per student.

In a time of difficult educational funding, it is a great tribute to the conference that 21 schools felt that the conference was so important that they allocate money to provide teacher substitutes and busing for students.

These 2004 attendees’ comments echo many of the comments that we have received throughout the years:

“It helped me realize how many dreams I have in my future.”

“I am highly grateful to attend this conference because I know now that just because a man does the job doesn’t mean that a woman can’t. I’m now extremely proud of my gender.”

Watch Your Mail – Check With Your Branch President!

Leadership events are happening throughout the state. New materials are being developed, supporting our Strategic Plan.

- ▼ Build your skills
- ▼ Connect with local counterparts
- ▼ Plan branch activities and fundraisers

Here are the first ones (more are in planning):

Leadership Workshops

North Coast District AAUW-CA Workshop

Saturday, May 15, 2004

San Mateo County Community College
District Board Room, 3401 CSM Drive,
San Mateo, CA • 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

East Bay District AAUW-CA Workshop

Saturday, May 15, 2004

Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Lafayette
Additional information will be available
when planning is finalized.

Branch Presidents will receive full details.

Be sure to check with your President or District Director. ***Don’t miss these events!***

WOMEN'S HISTORY: Ridge Women Who Made A Difference

By Marygrace Colby and Mickey Harnage, Paradise Branch

"A phonograph is like an old-time telephone" was the answer one fifth-grader gave Katie Rosenberg, in her role of Helen Berry. Fifth and six grade students learned much more than what a phonograph was from the presentation by members of Paradise AAUW of "Ridge Women Who Made a Difference".

Paradise Branch continues its yearly programs during National Women's History Month by working with high school girls to portray famous women, "Women In History." A branch member wrote this year's script, which features five prominent local women from Paradise and Magalia, from 1850 to 1993.



Prior to the performance, each school class was given a storyboard. The students became familiar with Ridge women and could see where they lived in relation to streets and buildings that are present today.

The audiences were delighted to learn that Magalia was known as "Dogtown," because Susannah Bassett sold her dogs to the miners, and Sawmill Peak was named after the sawmill started by her husband, after he discovered he was not a gold miner. Helen Berry showed the students that women's roles change through their lifetime. She was a wife, mother, and volunteer who spearheaded the construction of a swimming pool, revived the Harvest Fair, was a Red Cross Volunteer and later a reporter for the Paradise Post. She stressed that Paradise was "not always a paradise", but a physically hard life without plumbing, electricity, telephones and convenient food stores.

Frances Strong Breese, who arrived in 1876 at age nine, helped build the first community hall and helped to care for the Paradise cemetery. A gate, bearing her name, was installed at the cemetery entrance, where it still remains today. Minnie Starky Abrams supported women's suffrage, emphasizing that she put her job as Superintendent of schools at risk by sending home notes asking the students' fathers to vote for women's suffrage. She was elected Superintendent three times, but was not allowed to vote. The final woman, Nena Burkhalter was a single mother without

••••• much education, and the only beauty operator in town. Minnie Starky Abrams

She volunteered at the Gold Nugget Museum and started the Old Timers Picnic.
was elected Superintendent three times, but was not allowed to vote.

The presentation of "Women In History" included humorous bit parts played by the Co-Chairs Claudean McAlexander, as an old woman and Lois McDonald as a crusty old miner, who felt women were not smart enough to vote. The audience participated by providing the sound effects. This presentation helped to enlighten the future leaders of our community. For more information about our Paradise community, please go to <http://hometown.aol.com/AAUWParadise/>.

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Public Library Renaissance - 21st Century Navigators

By Ruth Currie, Whittier Branch

Last fall, on Oct. 25, 2003, AAUW members in the Los Angeles area were treated to a special event at the Cerritos library, a very modern state-of-the-art facility. A docent-led tour opened the forum attended by 110 people. The beauty of the facility was evident and the scope of services offered was introduced by the tour. The program was created with the cooperation of the Metropolitan Library System and the Los Angeles County Libraries.

The keynote speaker for the forum was Patt Morrison, a well-known journalist and public radio and television commentator. The library in her small Midwest town gave Patt a glimpse of a much larger world. Her recently published book, *The River*, sold well at the forum.

After a short demonstration of the technology available through the library, Joan Frye Williams, a consultant who was instrumental in creating the vision for this library, spoke of how libraries will be 21st century navigators for our communities if we but support and prod our legislators to provide the funding. The day concluded with a catered luncheon and free time to explore the facility.

The Cerritos library is a unique work of architecture. Its outer surface is entirely covered in titanium. Upon passing through the entrance to the library your eye immediately focuses on the immense salt-water fish tank, which encompasses an entire wall. This is adjacent to the children's library in which the central focus is a huge "learning tree" that the children can sit under and in to read. This magnificent facility is a treasure of modern artwork; it has over-forty computer stations and an extremely proactive staff that is circulating among the library's clients. With the installed technology, cultural and economic boundaries can be crossed to provide many services to the community.

Through this forum, AAUW members from the Los Angeles area were informed and stimulated to preserve this community resource that has been under severe attack in recent years. For more information on the organization and planning of this event, contact Nancy Kindness, chair of the committee. Nancy can be reached via e-mail at nan@aauw-ca.org.

Peacemaking Mission to Jordan

By Linda Hiebert Sekiguchi, San Jose, South Lake Tahoe, CA and Capitol, NV Branches (lhs@aauw-ca.org)

As a member of the Reno-Tahoe Friendship Force International, I joined 28 other ambassadors on a Peacemaking Mission to Jordan in December, just prior to the capture of Saddam Hussein. Our purpose was to meet Iraqi refugee families and foster friendships to begin the difficult task of reconciliation. As a Friendship Force, we represented the United States, Russia and Israel with arms of love, not violence.

An American Friends Service Committee couple from Baghdad told of their attempts to work with existing organizations to improve the lives of residents. They talked about sharing the difficulty of living in Baghdad with the Iraqi people. Road barricades and traffic diversions,

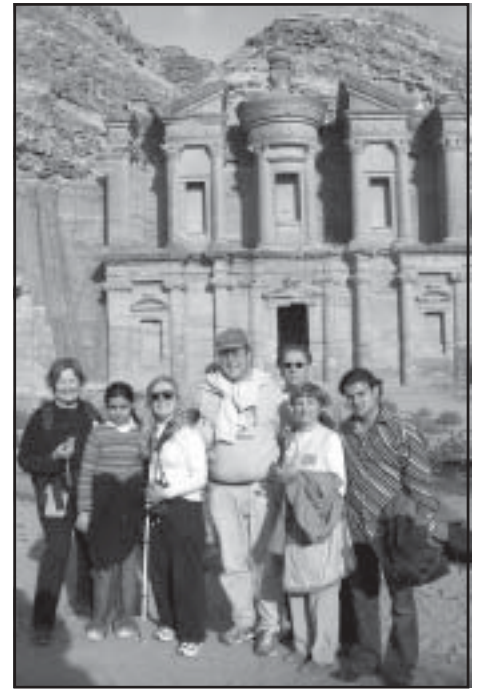
Our Iraqi friends taught us about family values, hospitality, tenacity, perseverance and courage in the face of most difficult circumstances.

school closures, lack of medical facilities, joblessness, electrical outages, and the 54,000 homeless people in the city add to its chaos.

Former Jordanian Ambassador to the United Nations Hasan Abu Nimah gave a most thoughtful presentation about U.S. involvement in the Middle East. He posed many questions, stating his opinion that the Geneva Accords and roadmap are destined to failure because they are not based on the needs and feelings of people, but on political agendas.

My 24-year-old Russian roommate, Tatyana, and I were hosted by Goran, an Iraqi Kurd artist who was working diligently to earn a living for himself as well as sending funds to his family in Baghdad. Although he was unable to speak English, we communicated basic essentials through sign language and when available, through an Iraqi friend.

The families we met varied considerably in their experiences and situations. For example, one family had left Baghdad to live in Amman eleven years ago escaping from Saddam Hussein's dictatorship. Another family had just left Iraq in July after a Fedayeen drive-by bombing of their 11-year-old's daughter's school during classes and the destruction of their home. Jordan limits the number of Iraqi refugees allowed into the country. Unfortunately, they are third class citizens and are either unable to obtain work, or are in the lowest

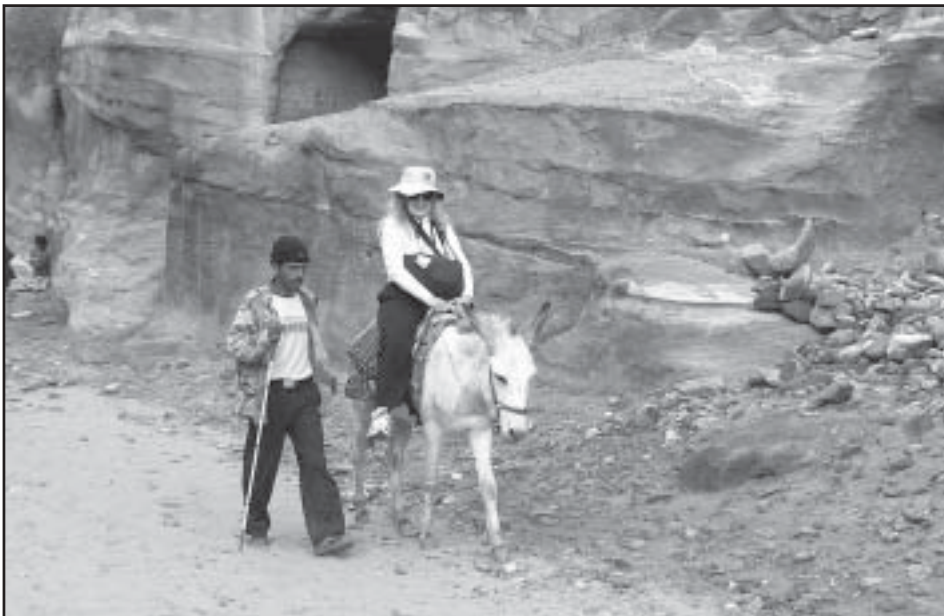


paying jobs and are required to pay an unaffordable tuition for their children's schooling. In spite of meager living circumstances, our Iraqi hosts were most hospitable and prepared Iraqi food to serve in a most loving manner.

Our group of Friendship Force ambassadors and Iraqi hosts enjoyed sightseeing excursions together. The ruins of the old Roman city of Jerash are some of the best preserved in the Middle East. The ancient rose-red city of Petra in a hidden canyon several hours south of Amman offered a look at life prior to the time of Christ. We hiked through the gorgeous seik (narrow canyon) that suddenly opens up into a wide expanse of incredible buildings carved into the cliffs.

Our Iraqi friends, both Christian and Muslim, taught us about family values, hospitality, tenacity, perseverance, and courage in the face of most difficult circumstances. They are keeping hope alive! The link below is to an additional article about this trip:

<http://www.rgj.com/news/stories/html/2004/01/05/60793.php?sp1=rgj&sp2=New>



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February 2004

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Tech Trek Volunteers Still Needed

By Marie Wolbach, Tech Trek Director

Tech Trek counselors (Dorm Moms) and nurses are still needed, and it is **not** too late to volunteer. Job descriptions appear in the November California Perspective, on the AAUW CA website, and in materials of each branch Tech Trek Coordinator. You may volunteer by sending an email with the following information to techtrekvol@aauw-ca.org or by mailing this form. Directors will finalize staff assignments in late April so please respond **immediately**.

I can serve as:

- Counselor
- Nurse

I can work at the following Tech Trek site(s)

- Mills College (June 27-July 3)
- Stanford U. (July 11-17)
- CSU-Fresno (July 18-24)
- UC-San Diego (July 18-24)
- Whittier College (August 8-14)



Name: _____

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Please mail this form to:

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