

THE SPOKES-WOMAN



AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITY
WOMEN

May 2008

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The Wonder That is India

A program presented by
AAUW-Davis member Chithra Lakshmanan

May 14, 2008
At International House, 10 College Park (at Russell Blvd), Davis
6:30-8:30 pm

Indian Dinner – prepared by the speaker and her friends. Donation \$10.00

Part 1 – Cultural Program: Dance from India performed by the children of the Indo-American community, Davis

Part 2 -- “The Wonder That Is India,” presentation by speaker Chithra Lakshmanan

Part 3 -- Slides of southern India: presentation by photographer Laurie Friedman

Chithra Lakshmanan will give us an overview of the history and culture of India.

Chithra was born in Calicut (Kerala state) on the southwest coast of India. She came from a professional family of lawyers (father, grandfather, uncles), and was encouraged to excel and participate fully during her convent education and beyond. Chithra studied sociology, with a history minor, at Queen Mary’s college in Chennai, India . She continued and earned a Master’s Degree at London University,UK.

Chithra married Dr. C. Lakshmanan who was an agricultural food production technology expert with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of the United Nations. She accompanied him on his assignments in several countries including Austria, Indonesia , Nigeria, Sudan and Mexico.

In 1974 the family settled down in Davis with their two sons Rayan and Hari. *Con't on p.2*

Report on Annual Meeting April 12, 2008 AAUW Davis Branch Board and Officers 2008-2009 by Juliana Wells

Present at the meeting were: Onida Norman, Mariana Henwood, Marjorie Sorenson, Pam Krug, Shirley Rolewicz, Gail Johnson, Juliana Wells, Nan Yates, Parto Aram, Chithra Lakshmanan, Lose Baer, Elaine Ginosar, Barbara Bower, Janice Bridge, Irene Cameron, Rhonda Reed and Betty Jane Polk, who brought a future member, Marti Abbott.

con't on page 3

Calendar of Upcoming Events Davis Branch AAUW May 2008

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Wednesday, May 14  
**Interest Group:**  
Covell Gardens Book Club  
3 pm  
Covell Gardens Library  
1111 Alvarado Av, Davis

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Wednesday, May 14
The Wonder That is India
International House
6:30 pm
See article at left

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Monday, May 19  
*(In commemoration  
of the 19th Amendment  
on the 19th of the month)*  
**Social Hour**  
5:30 pm  
At the home of  
Barbara Bower  
1330 Antelope Av #27,  
Davis

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Tuesday, May 20
**Meeting of Board
& Officers**
7:15 pm
At the home of
Rhonda Reed
320 I St, Davis

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Wednesday, May 21  
**Membership Tabling &  
Dinner Out  
aka Picnic in the Park  
At the Davis Farmers'  
Market**  
5:30 PM  
Community Park, Davis  
(Between B & C Sts, and  
3rd and Russell)

# President's Message



*Rhonda Reed  
President, AAUW Davis  
2007-2008*

Recent events have reminded us that, in fact, equity for women and girls is still an issue, not just a slogan. At the national level, legislation to correct the draconian Supreme Court ruling that limited a woman's right to challenge workplace gender inequities to within 180 days of the occurrence recently failed to pass a vote in the Senate, owing to Republican opposition. The 180 day statute of limitations is ridiculous, given that discovery of pay inequities is often blocked by company policies that prohibit employees from discussing salaries. What we have seen from the LAF litigants that have spoken to us is that such complaints aren't based on a one-time goof; they usually represent a progressive series of inequities that occur over time.

At the local level, Friday's Enterprise ran a story (front of Sports section) on the Title IX case against UCD brought by the UCD female wrestlers. This case has been dismissed on a procedural technicality!

Now more than ever women need the support and advocacy of AAUW. Your Association and state dues pay for key lobbying and information exchange about national and state legislation affecting women and girls. Your Branch dues support our local communication and support of those issues, as well as access to a network of supportive women and men. May is Membership renewal month, so please renew early and be a part of the early-bird drawing. And, recruit a friend because new members recruited through our May membership drive will receive half off of Association Dues.

Equitably yours, *Rhonda Reed*

NOTE FROM RHONDA: I'm disappointed to report that our Davis Speech Trek winner, Jasmine Segal, was not selected to advance from District competition to the State convention. Nonetheless, she did a great job on her speech and I feel she represented AAUW Davis well. Better luck next year, Jasmine!

## **American Association of University Women Mission Statement:**

AAUW advances equity for all women and girls through advocacy, education and research.

## **California AAUW Vision Statement:**

AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls

*Con't from previous page*

Chithra's activism also includes Indian Immigration and Community education.

Chithra and Lux are founding members of the 'India Association of Davis'. In the 90's she was chair of the Indo-American Political Association, a PAC group that gave input to Legislators and worked to form an "India Caucus" in the congress in Washington. As immigrants, Chithra and her husband feel a deep commitment to give back to the community and help others do the same.

Chithra was involved with an AAUW Great Books group. Believing in the practices of equal education for women, personal growth, and women bonding, she joined AAUW in 2002. She served as president of this esteemed organization for 2 years (2005-2007). The AAUW statement has personal significance to her, as she was "allowed" to pursue her academic dreams and sociological goals.

Presently, the Lakshmanans visit India every year for 3 months. This makes them very aware of current conditions there.

**Slides of Southern India – Laurie Friedman.** We are very fortunate to have Laurie, an ardent Global traveler and professional photographer, present her slides of South India, including the beautiful back waters of Kerala.

Reservations: Betty Jane Polk – 758-5517 or [bjpolk@cal.net](mailto:bjpolk@cal.net)

## What's Happening on April 19?

We get together every month on the 19<sup>th</sup> day to socially commemorate the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which granted voting rights to women in the US. In May are invited to gather at Barbara Bower's house in North Davis at 1330 Antelope Avenue, #27. If you need directions, call Barbara at 753-8279 or email her at [bebower@ucdavis.edu](mailto:bebower@ucdavis.edu).

### The Atria Covell Gardens/AAUW Davis Book Club

The Atria Covell Gardens/  
AAUW Davis Branch Book  
Club meets on the second  
Wednesday of the month at  
3:00 p.m. in the library of  
Covell Gardens.

### MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PICNIC IN THE PARK

On May 21 at 5:30 PM, we will be setting up a membership table at the Davis Farmers' Market, located between 3rd and Russell Blvd and B and C Streets. There are a plethora of food options for dinner, as the vendor area has expanded since last year! Come and eat out with other AAUW members, as we share membership tabling responsibilities.

In future months, we plan to be at Picnic in the Park on the second Wednesday.

*Con't from front page* After a delicious breakfast at the URC Rhonda opened the meeting with reports on the convention. She then reviewed our year so far.

- Rhonda thanked Shirley, Gail, Chithra, Barbara, Nan and Michelle Clark for their work toward a successful Speech Trek (which will be open to 9-12 grades next school year). Rhonda will pursue a merit badge possibility for Girl Scouts who apply.
- Celebrate the 19<sup>th</sup> has worked well.
- Thanks was given to Marjorie for her sessions on Mexican Dominoes and the organization of the International Cuisine interest group.
- The EF/LAF email appeal did not work so a letter will be sent this year.
- We're hoping to have a bike ride through town as a fundraiser. We have asked Adam Bridge and Betty Jane to help plan it.
- We have presented or co-sponsored programs to help women of the world (such as Heifer Project, UN support groups) reminding us that there will be no equity until basic needs are met.
- Membership is steady at 50. National will offer half price for *new members*.
- At the national level they are trying to re-brand AAUW, to use it as an acronym instead of words.
- It is our goal to go to an electronic newsletter as *THE SPOKESWOMAN* is the main cost in the budget.
- Harwant Khush will present a computer program class for members. Our web-site is part of outreach also.
- We are attempting to create community visibility with co-programs and a higher profile event focus.
- The pay gap continues. Women earn 23% less than male counterparts. Requiring silence around salaries is one way to keep salaries down.
- We may have workshops to help younger women. Other groups like AARP and NOW can work with us to reach out.
- AAUW is actively supporting Assembly Bill 2195, the Brownley Education Funding Reform and is sponsoring a bill, SB 1712, which seeks to ban lipstick made with lead.
- Lois and Elaine are interested in working with Reader's Theater to present a Women's History Program in March.

At our April 12 annual meeting, the following slate was elected:

President— Rhonda Reed  
President-Elect— open  
Membership Vice President — open  
Program CoVice-Presidents— Chithra Lakshmanan, Parto Aram and Marj Sorenson  
Membership Treasurer—Gail Johnson  
Newsletter—Barbara Bower  
Secretary—Nan Yates  
EF/LAF Chair—Eleanor Lake and Parto Aram  
Media Relations—Harwant Khush

For questions or volunteering, please call Rhonda Reed at 297-0460 or [salmonlady@sbcglobal.net](mailto:salmonlady@sbcglobal.net).



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#### AAUW Davis Branch Officers

##### *fiscal year July 2007-June 2008*

President  
Rhonda Reed salmonlady@sbcglobal.net

Program Vice Presidents  
Betty Jane Polk bjpolk@cal.net  
Sarah Taylor set-420@comcast.net  
Marjorie Sorenson 758-4164

Membership Vice President  
Chithra Lakshmanan lchithra@hotmail.com

Treasurer  
Gail Johnson gjohnson@cal.net

Secretary  
Barbara Bower bebower@ucdavis.edu

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Shirley Rolewicz shirley.wr@hotmail.com

Legal Advocacy Fund Chair  
Eleanor Lake eleanorlake@sbcglobal.net

Public Policy Chair  
Jini Scammell-Tinling jini@jps.net

##### *Newsletter patrons 2007-2008:*

Karen Manelis, Gail Johnson, Irene Cameron, Rhonda Reed, Eleanor Lake, Phyllis Hall, Dorothy Brazelton, Pat Yokom, Doris Hass, Juliana Wells, Debbie Nichols Poulos, Pat Snyder, Bev Frannea, Shirley Rolewicz, Onida Norman and Mariana Henwood

#### Look Forward to These Events In the Upcoming Months:

**June 7**—Installation of Board and officers of Davis branch, lunch at Little Prague

**July 19**—BBQ at Juliana Wells' house

The international cuisine group, which has been meeting every two months, will have its last dinner meeting for the 07-08 year on May 4<sup>th</sup> at the home of Nan Yates at 5 pm. This time the menu will be Swedish. If you are interested in becoming a member of the group please contact Marj Sorenson at 758-4164.

#### WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SEASON BEGINS

Do you wish to know what's exciting about professional women's basketball? Be Juliana's **guest** at a Monarch's basketball game at ARCO Arena in Sacramento. The first home game is May 17<sup>th</sup> against the San Antonio Silver Stars. These women are intense, competitive and worthy of your support. The whole experience is entertaining and exhilarating. Call or email Juliana Wells for more information. 758-3011 [carwells@thegrid.net](mailto:carwells@thegrid.net)