



THE CONNECTION

WEST CONTRA COSTA BRANCH
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy
westcontracosta-ca.aauw.net

VOLUME XXXVII

NEWSLETTER 2

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2020



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well it is a new world dealing with COVID-19 and no in-person meetings for the foreseeable future. AAUW and our branch has been adjusting moving to all virtual meetings. Since April our Board has been meeting monthly via Zoom. All members are invited to the meeting the first Tuesday of the month at 2:00 pm.

AAUW Fund Named Gift Honoree: Our branch is very generous. At the AAUW CA Annual Meeting we were recognized as number 11 in per capita donations to AAUW Funds in 2019 (\$99.17). This includes donations to Vivian Coe's unfinished endowment. Because of our donations we may select a named gift honoree. **Mimi Fruehan** was selected in appreciation for her significant contributions to the mission of AAUW and support of the branch. At the June 2 Board meeting Mimi picked up her certificate that had been placed outside her front door. Congratulations, Mimi!

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<p style="text-align: center;">Hospitality Chair</p> <p>Sally Dunham, 758-4094 sallydunham1@gmail.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Website Manager</p> <p>Barbara Vaughan (510) 548-1942 barbvaughan@mac.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Bylaws, Policies & Procedures</p> <p>Marilynn Bracelin, 223-4057 bracelins14@gmail.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter Editor</p> <p>Sue Walenta 526-4383 awalenta@comcast.net</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter Circulation</p> <p>Marion McIntire, 237-0534</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Read Aloud Chair</p> <p>Judy Sam, 527-1661 Jssam47@yahoo.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Telephone Monitor</p> <p>Janet Mengle 232-2676</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Facebook Monitor</p> <p>Christine Hills 734-6505 chills627@gmail.com</p>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Continued from Page 1

2020-2021 Program: Our Board was able to put together an exciting calendar of monthly virtual meetings through January, 2021 (see page 4). For **September** we were invited to the September 12 CalACS-WCC virtual meeting to hear Dr. Cheryl Sundari Dembe's talk "*A 48-year PhD Pathway: Secrets to Success in Attaining One's Goals*". Hopefully, many of you were able to attend. Detail information about Dr. Dembe and her talk is on page 5. For **October** we have two main events. On October 3 at 10:30 a.m. the LWV BAE will present the **California Propositions Pros and Cons**. Then on October 10th and 24th the **AAUW Fund Fellows/Grant recipients will talk**. In **November Ruth Sasaki** will discuss her Topaz Stories Project (rescheduled from April). And in **January Dr. Ruth O. Saxton** will talk about her new book, "*The Book of Old Ladies*".

Interest Groups: Christine Hills is starting a **new virtual interest group – Tell Your Story!** See write-up page 7. The **first class** will be **Tuesday, October 27, 2020 2-4 pm**. Christine is our Zoom person and is willing to help other members setup virtual meetings for Interest groups. For example, although we can't meet at a restaurant, a group could meet virtually to share recipes / menus.

Proposed 2020-2021 Budget: Review the Board proposed Budget on page 3. We will discuss and approve it at our October 6 Board meeting. There are several changes. We decided not to generate a new Membership Directory and with virtual meetings we decided to reduce the speaker honorarium and hospitality expenses. We will however continue to pay Christ Lutheran Church the room rental fee. We decided we needed to support them. With the uncertainty of the 2021 Tech Trek camps, we didn't budget for the Tech Trek family fee income. Thanks as always for the extra donations through the Adopt-A-Fund Program to supplement our branch dues (\$448) which does not meet our regular expenses (\$2,588). Note there is over \$2,000 in our carryover / reserve. In our discussion of the proposed budget we will also review the 'special buckets' and how these funds should be presented/used.

Thanks for your support. I enjoy working with such special people.



Contra Costa College Scholarship

For many years our branch has awarded the Mary Ellen Bales AAUW scholarship at Contra Costa College to a woman from the Center for Science Excellence with a STEM major in an underrepresented field continuing her education at a four-year college or university. The scholarship was administered by the tax-exempt Contra Costa College (CCC) Foundation.

In a recent audit it was determined that the CCC Foundation gets Federal Funding through the support it gets from the Contra Costa College District. Therefore under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, all CCC Foundation scholarships must be open to everyone. Since our scholarship is for women only, it can no longer be administered by the CCC Foundation and our account there was closed. The \$1,205 remaining in the account was returned to the branch.

The Board voted to continue this worthwhile endeavor and is now looking into providing the scholarship on our own. Seti Sidharta, a branch member and Director of the Center for Science Excellence at Contra Costa College, has volunteered to administer our scholarship applications at Contra Costa College. We are also applying to the AAUW California Special Projects Fund, a non-profit corporation, to receive tax deductible donations for our local scholarship. We will also have to look at how other local scholarships handle the giving of the money to the recipients. The CCC Foundation worked with the transfer school. Everything is now on hold.

Roberta Montgomery, President



WEST CONTRA COSTA BRANCH AAUW ----- Proposed Budget 2020 – 2021
Christine Hills, Treasurer

INCOME:

Carry-over:		
Other		2,567
Contra Costa College Scholarship		1,205
Scholarship Fund (SF)		2,005
Special Projects		232
“Let’s Go” Fund		2,510
Memberships:	6MBHL + (28 @ 16)	448
Donations – Adopt-A-Fund		1,800
Other Donations		0
Total Proposed Income:		10,767

EXPENDITURES:

Interbranch Council (IBC)		30
Insurance Assessment		169
Funds Assessment (tax deductible, from SF)		40
Newsletter and Directory:		
Printing, Postage and Labels		300
Directory Printing		0
Program:		
Speakers (4@100)		400
Hospitality		50
Rental for Meetings (7@80)		560
Installation Luncheon		100
Administration:		
Membership (VP expenses & recruiting)		100
President & Other Officers (supplies & misc.)		125
PO Box Rental		134
Tech-Trek Recruitment, Reception, Printing & Postage		300
Website		120
Registration Convention, Conferences		200
Contra Costa College Scholarship		1,205
Scholarship Fund (SF)		1,965
Special Projects		232
“Let’s Go” Fund		2,510
Other Expenses / Donations / Reserve		2,227
Total Expenditures:		10,767

OTHER BALANCES (August 2020)

CCC Foundation – Mary Ellen Bales AAUW Scholarship Acct.		0
AAUW WCC SSU Tech Trek Account		14,635
Checking Acct. – Balance from Ledger		10,892



ONLINE CALENDAR – MONTHLY EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2020:

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

CalACS-WCC Virtual Meeting: **Saturday, September 12, 2020 at 11:00 am** Dr. Cheryl Sundari Dembe's talk "*A 48-year PhD Pathway: Secrets to Success in Attaining One's Goals*". Detail information on page 4. **Must register by Thursday, September 10 on Eventbrite (<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4642140>).**

OCTOBER 2020:

LWV BAE Virtual Meeting: **Saturday, October 3, 2020 at 10:30 am** with Berkeley Branch League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville will present the **California Propositions Pros and Cons.**

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

AAUW Fund Virtual Luncheons: We have an opportunity to meet some of the inspiring women Fellows/Grant recipients at the **2020 AAUW Fund Virtual Luncheons** (webinars) on **Saturday, October 10th and Saturday, October 24th.** Both webinars begin at **1:00 pm.** There will be different speakers at each event; so, you can attend one or both. Register for the webinars by clicking [HERE](#).

NOVEMBER 2020:

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, November 3, 2020 at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

Virtual Meeting: using Zoom **Saturday, November 21, at 10:00 am.** **Ruth Sasaki**, award-winning author, will discuss her Topaz Stories Project" about the World War II Topaz Internment Camp and its relevance today. Ruth was scheduled to talk at our meeting last April. Christine has worked with Ruth to setup a Zoom presentation which will include pictures.

DECEMBER 2020:

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

JANUARY 2021:

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

Virtual Meeting: using Zoom **Saturday, January 16, at 10:00 am.** **Dr. Ruth O. Saxton**, professor Emerita of English at Mills College, will talk about her new book, "*The Book of Old Ladies*", which introduces readers to thirty stories celebrating fictional "women of a certain age".



HEAR DR. CHERYL SUNDARI DEMBE'S TALK
"A 48-year PhD Pathway: Secrets to Success in Attaining One's Goals"

The California Section American Chemical Society
 Women Chemists Committee

Online Zoom Meeting
Saturday, September 12, 2020
11:00 am

Our member Elaine Yamaguchi has invited us to attend this CalACS-WCC virtual meeting. AAUW groups find Dr. Dembe's talk very interesting. Detail information about Dr. Dembe and her talk are below and at website www.calacs.org. All are welcome, but you **must make a reservation by Thursday, September 10**. The Zoom link to the meeting will be sent out on Friday. To register on Eventbrite go to <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4642140> or to the website www.calacs.org and click on event /event date. Note the talk begins at 11:00, but at 10:30 there will be 'chatting' at the meeting.

About the Speaker

Dr. Cheryl Sundari Dembe has a BS from The University of Michigan and a MS (1970) and PhD (2018) from The University of Chicago, working in superfluidity. She taught chemistry at Diablo Valley College for 34 years, serving three times as Department Chair, as well as an interim Division Chair of Physical Science and Engineering, hired architects for a Physical Science building, and spent 3 years with them designing it. She also taught at Holy Names College, Laney and College of Marin as well as at UC Berkeley on sabbatical. She was the first woman chemist, first woman Chemistry Department chair, and first woman Physical Science Division chair (interim) at DVC, as well as one of the first women to have children while teaching. She also worked in chemical industry. She authored the ancillary materials for "The World of Chemistry", a 26-episode TV series hosted by Nobel laureate Roald Hoffman. Barred from normal research pathways without the doctorate, she developed 25 original chemical theories applied to life, society and the individual, interwoven at a lay level in the story line of her book, *The Choice of Happiness, Glimpses from an [Extraordinary Ordinary Scientific Mystical Life](#)* by Sundari Dembe. She has been active in music, singing with SF Opera, Oakland Symphony, a global Pineal Toning Choir, and has YouTube music videos, two on chemistry reactions. She has traveled to 45 countries, and been a rancher, and a meditation teacher. She speaks before many groups, has been interviewed on TV and radio, as well as having her story appear in major news publications, including Chemistry World, NPR, Mercury Sun, NYTimes and CBS News.

About her Talk

Dr. Dembe explores supportive educational influences, role models, and historical influences, along with difficult equity issues along her 48-year pathway to the granting of her PhD. The degree was completed in 1971, but blocked from write-up and publication when her advisor died, and those close to her research area refused a woman in their group. In 2000, she discovered that two years after she would have published, very similar parallel research was published, and awarded the Nobel Prize. After contacting Douglas Osheroff, the Nobel laureate, she was encouraged and offered support by him in requesting that The University of Chicago award her the degree. At that point, the letter went unanswered. In 2018, she was inspired by the #MeToo movement to write again, this time with a successful outcome. Her Four Steps used to encourage a correction when unjustly treated, are detailed. They include the importance of dropping anger, viewing the person or institution before you as the solution not the problem, believing that they have the integrity to want to right an error, considering that there is always a win-win solution, offering multiple items that could be satisfactory resolutions, and releasing focus on a specific outcome. This leads to successful results for everyone involved.



All registered voters in California will receive a Vote-by-Mail (VBM) ballot in early October. You have choices for using that ballot:

- 1) Complete it and mail it in – if you do this, mail early. Ballots must be postmarked by Nov 3. They have 17 days after that date to reach the Registrar’s office, but the postmark must be by Nov 3. If you put it in a mailbox on Nov 3 it will not be postmarked in time. Be early!
- 2) Complete the ballot and drop it in an official drop box. Your Registrar of Voters will post locations of drop boxes. The Registrar regularly collects the ballots from the boxes.
- 3) Take your completed ballot to a Vote Center and hand it in. You don’t have to use the VBM ballot. You can vote in person and just hand in your unused ballot at a Vote Center.

Nancy Mahr, AAUW CA Public Policy Committee

*****SAVE THE DATE*****

Saturday, October 3, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville
Virtual Meeting

California Propositions Pros and Cons

This is a joint meeting with the Berkeley Branch



The **AAUW California Public Policy Committee** has reviewed the 12 propositions that will be on the November 3 ballot and is making a **SUPPORT** recommendation on the following 7 that relate to our priorities and mission:

- Prop 14 – Stem Cell Research (access to quality health care)
- Prop 15 – Property Taxes (funding for education)
- Prop 16 – Affirmative Action (educational opportunity; social justice)
- Prop 17 – Voting for Parolees (expansion of voting rights)
- Prop 18 – Voting at 17 (encourages voting)
- Prop 21 – Rent Control (affordable housing)
- Prop 25 – Cash Bail (social & economic justice)



A victory for Equal Pay! AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund plaintiff Aileen Rizo's eight-year legal battle ended in July when the U.S. Supreme Court let a lower court decision— that employers cannot use salary history as a reason for paying men more than women—stand.

AAUW FUND

As we did last year, we will have a one-time annual **AAUW Fund** request for the **Vivian Lamont Coe American Fellowship**, part of the California Unfinished Endowments. Please send your checks made out to **AAUW Fund** with the fund number, **4046**, on the memo line to **Barbara Vaughan**, 970 Wildcat Canyon Road, Berkeley, California 94708. We look forward to the completion of Vivian's Fellowship. Please donate as you are able. We are making good progress, but Vivian's Fund still needs over \$12,000.

Barbara Vaughan, AAUW Fund VP

2020 AAUW Fund Virtual Luncheons

Saturday, October 10th and Saturday, October 24th at 1:00 pm

There will be different speakers at each event; so, you can attend one or both.
Register for the webinars by clicking [HERE](#)



BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

The Afternoon Books Group March 2020 selection – **“Where the Crawdads Sing”** by Delia Owens
From Jackie Title – **“The Library Book”** by Susan Orlean



Although the **2020 Tech Trek** camps were cancelled, the branches completed the selection process to acknowledge the applicants efforts and honor their accomplishments. WCC submitted 10 girls which included two alternates. The branch decided to honor our 2020 Tech Trek girls by sending them the Tech Trek certificate in a nice folder with a \$25 Barnes and Nobel gift card. The girls will also receive the 2020 Tech Trek camp T-shirt. Note that the funds raised for the cancelled 2020 Tech Trek camp season are being deposited in an interest-bearing account until they are needed to fund a future Tech Trek camp season. With the \$8,000 not used for the 2020 camp our account balance is \$14,635.

Roberta Montgomery, President

New Virtual Interest Group TELL YOUR STORY!

Fourth Tuesday 2-4 pm via Zoom
Hosted by Christine Hills

Do you have a novel in the drawer? Do you like to write poetry? Are you toying with the idea of writing your memoirs? Bring your work to the group and share your story. Tell Your Story! will be a writer support group for any writing you wish to share. The group's job is to listen actively and provide feedback to the writer. The **first class** will be **Tuesday, October 27, 2020 2-4 pm**. Send an email to chills627@gmail.com if you want to receive an invitation. The first meeting will be informational and discuss helpful books you might want to read.

Christine Hills

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

The Board decided that we would not print a new Directory for 2020-2021. We will continue to use last year's Directory (**2019-2020 with gold cover**) that Ellen Mills and her husband Paul printed. Member information updates will continue to be published in the Newsletter. Note new address for Rosemary Corbin below. I have extra copies of last year's Directory. Let me know if you need one.

CORBIN, ROSEMARY **474 Western Drive**, Richmond 94801

Roberta Montgomery, President

CULTURE CORNER for SEPTEMBER and OCTOBER 2020

By Barbara Miller

El Cerrito Art Association. This year's annual art show has been cancelled.

- Mon., Sep 14 and Mon., Oct 12, 7:00pm-8:30pm. **Monthly Meetings**. Via Zoom. Programs TBD. Check the website for information. <https://elcerritoart.org/meeting-news/>

NIAD Art Center. 551 23rd Ave., Richmond. 510-620-0290. Click here to see what's going on in September and October: <http://niadart.org>

- Online Exhibitions: **The Wonderful Colorful World**, selected by NIAD's Professional Practice Group. <https://niadart.myshopify.com/collections/209>. Some of these items are for sale.
- You can visit past online exhibits here: <http://niadart.org/exhibits/onlinehistoryarchive/>

Richmond Art Center. 2540 Barrett Ave., Richmond. 510-620-6772. The largest visual arts center in the East Bay. While RAC's galleries are closed due to COVID-19, RAC's website is featuring new projects that represent how artists are adapting, responding and imagining during this period of COVID-19 self-isolation. <http://www.richmondartcenter.org>

- Online exhibitions:
 - Ongoing: **Portrait of a Neighborhood**. Over 50 photographs taken around the world "documenting how life has changed while also creating a global sense of togetherness." This exhibit was scheduled to close on August 15, but was still available as of late August.
 - Ongoing: **Three Artists in the Studio**. This year's winners of the RAC Spotlight Award are unable to show their work in the galleries. They have each made videos discussing their creative processes. This exhibit was scheduled to close at the end of July, but was still available as of the end of August. <https://richmondartcenter.org/exhibitions/three-artists-in-the-studio/>
 - Ongoing: **Exposure: The Photography of Ezly Torrez**. In response to the requirement to wear masks, Torrez decided to use the mask as a prop for performing characters, inspired by the beauty and technique of classical painting. Some of his photographs can be viewed here: <https://richmondartcenter.org/exhibitions/exposure/>

Bridge Storage and Art Space. 23 Maine Ave., Richmond. 510-233-3348. <http://www.bridgestorage.com>.

A coworking space and art gallery, which includes a shared art studio, woodshop, metal shop and filmmaking facility. Among the experiences offered at The Bridge are artist support groups, songwriting sessions, mindfulness training, and woodshop safety training. <https://www.bridgestorage.com/events/>

- **Sep 14 through Nov. 9. Bridge the Ballot.** An online and, if possible, live exhibit that underscores the importance of one person's vote, featuring Richmond artists. For a list of artists and other details, go to: <https://www.bridgestorage.com/bridge-the-ballot/>.
- Fri., Oct 9 and Fri, Oct 16, 7:00pm. **Online Artist Talks.** *Bridge the Ballot* artists will talk about their work on Zoom. For viewing instructions, go to: https://www.bridgestorage.com/events/list/?tribe_paged=2&tribe_event_display=list&tribe-bar-date=2020-08-19
- Fri., Sep 25, 7:00pm-8:30pm. **Bridge the Ballot Virtual Reception and Panel Discussion.** A hybrid live/virtual exhibit, hosted by Richmond City Council candidate Claudia Jimenez. Exhibiting artists will be speaking. Instructions for joining the talks online are here: <http://www.bridgestorage.com/event/bridge-the-ballot-virtual-reception-and-panel-discussion/>
- NOTE: The Richmond Standard carried an interesting article on one of the featured artists, Rebecca Garcia-Gonzales last August: <https://richmondstandard.com/lifestyle/entertainment-and-food/2019/08/21/richmond-artists-portraits-challenge-perceptions/>

Contra Costa Community Theatre. 951 Pomona Ave., El Cerrito. (510) 524-9012. <https://ccct.org>

CCCT presents via zoom **Reading Stage** – a Reader's Theater Series of 21st-Century plays by women and playwrights of color. They are one night only. While you can watch for free the theater asks for a \$10 donation. The current play is:

-Mon., Sep 14 7:00 pm – I AND YOU an ode to youth, life, love, and the strange beauty of human connectedness. See website for more information and to RSVP.

Cerrito Theater (Rialto Cinemas). 10070 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-273-9102. <https://rialtocinemas.com/index.php?location=cerrito> The theater is currently closed. It offers a selection of movies for streaming at home for \$10.00-\$20.00 per movie. You can stream the movie on your computer, phone, or, if you have a browser available, on your TV. **This theater is in danger of closing permanently. You can support it by purchasing "tickets" to view these films.** Here are some of the current offerings:

- **Flannery: The Storied Life of the Writer from Georgia.** This film was the first winner of the Library of Congress/Lavigne/Ken Burns Prize for Film. A "lyrical, intimate exploration of the life and work of author Flannery O'Connor." Starring Mary Karr, Tommy Lee Jones, Hilton Als, and Mary Steenburgen. \$10 for a 7-day rental.
- **Jazz on the Summer's Day.** Filmed at the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival, directed by Bert Stern. See the legendary jazz greats at their peak: Louis Armstrong, Thelonious Monk, Anita O'Day, Dinah Washington, and Mahalia Jackson. \$10 for a 5-day rental.
- **APOCALYPSE '45.** This film "combines pristine raw, color film footage of the last months of the war in the Pacific with the voices of two dozen men who lived through the nightmarish events. \$12 for a 14-day rental.
- **My Dog Stupid!** An unexpected friendship between a stray dog and a middle-aged writer. In French with subtitles. Mick LaSalle's review in the *Chronicle* is available here: <https://datebook.sfchronicle.com/movies-tv/review-my-stupid-dog-not-so-much-about-the-pup-but-about-a-collapsing-marriage>. \$10.
- **A Thousand Cuts.** About the authoritarian regime of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. "Journalist Maria Ressa places the tools of the free press—and her freedom—on the line in defense of truth and democracy." \$9.99 for a 14-day rental.
- **The Con.** The result of a 9-year investigation into the 2008 financial crisis. "Who did it, why it happened, and how our country went from 'of, for and by the people' to 'of, for and by the corporation'" A 5-part docu-series. Included in the price is a Q&A with the filmmakers. Read a detailed summary of the film here: https://rialtocinemas.com/index.php?location=cerrito&film=2020_con_cer \$20 for a 7-day rental.

- **Rebuilding Paradise.** A moving account of the tragedy and rebuilding of the city of Paradise, California in 2018 after the devastating Camp Fire, and the resilience of its residents. The price includes a Q&A with the movie's Oscar-winning director Ron Howard (*Frost/Nixon*, *Apollo 13*, *A Beautiful Mind*). \$12 for a 3-day rental.

Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park. 1414 Harbour Way South, Suite 3000, Richmond. 510-232-5050. Rosie the Riveter Park is currently closed. Betty Reid Soskin, at 98 the country's oldest serving park ranger, returned to work in January after a stroke in 2019.

El Cerrito Trail Trekkers. The El Cerrito Trail Trekkers is a nonprofit group dedicated to preserving, improving and extending the city's network of public pathways, stairs, trails and greenways for pedestrian and bicycle use, advocating for increased public open space, and sponsoring activities that involve trails and open space, including hikes, festivals, and other educational events. While all events have been suspended for the time being, you can enjoy the fruits of this group's work by trekking the trails yourself. Recently, they have concentrated on the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area, and last May they installed a 15-sign interpretative walk, funded by the El Cerrito Rotary Club. For information and directions, go to: <https://ectrailtrekkers.wordpress.com/>

El Cerrito Library. 6510 Stockton Ave. (510) 526-7512. <https://ccclib.org>. Front door service is now available and all Events are online via Zoom. The library also continues to offer the following services and many more. <https://ccclib.org/digital-resources/>

- **Kanopy.** Get free access to thousands of movies with your library card. You can stream these movies to your TV, your computer, or your mobile phone.
- **Newspapers.** Using your library card, you can read entire newspapers online, including the *East Bay Times* and the *New York Times*.
- **Genealogy.** Use *AncestryLibrary*, a genealogy database, to research your family tree.
- **Research.** *Explora* offers the full text of high-quality research articles.