



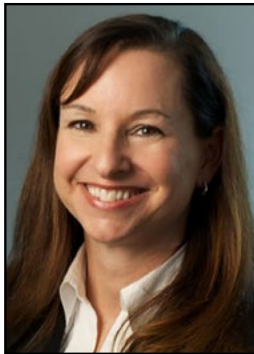
Who are those masked women? Mid-Pen hikers, of course, this time on a hike near College of San Mateo overlooking the bay.

‘You provide the voice, and we’ll provide the megaphone’ Peninsula attorney discusses civil liberties

By Micki Carter

“Isn’t it especially poignant,” Peninsula attorney Beth von Emster asked the Mid-Pen members gathered on Nov. 7, “for this to be the day we learn that we have the first woman vice president 100 years after women got the right to vote?”

Thirty-five members had joined a Zoom call to hear von Emster, the daughter of long-time member Ann Fleishman and a volunteer with the Northern California chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, talk about the rights of American women. And they agreed as enthusiastically as a Zoom pre-



Beth von Emster

sentation will allow. Heads nodded almost in unison.

She began by checking off some of the issues that can only be seen today as threats to women’s civil liberties. On the national level, she noted that reproductive rights have suffered significant losses in the last few years. “The capacity of family-planning clinics has been reduced by half, and, of course, with Judge Amy Coney Barrett replacing the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the U.S. Supreme Court puts those rights under serious threat.”

Pay inequality is an ongoing issue when “women make 75 cents for every dollar men make. And that disparity gets progressively worse when women of color are factored in.” She added that we may not be able to track that salary difference for long since “employers are no longer required to submit data.” She also noted that the Violence Against Women Act expired in 2019 and hasn’t yet been reauthorized.

But in California, she said, “we tend to think of ourselves as in a protected bubble. But that’s not necessarily the case.”

See MEGAPHONE, Page 7

New member to talk about political labels

By Carole Farina

Socialism, capitalism and the welfare state will be the topic of discussion for Sally Bould at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12.

With Sen. Bernie Sanders calling himself a Socialist, there seems to be a lot of confusion about the meaning of the term.



Sally Bould

A new Mid-Pen member, Sally will cover the definitions of capitalism and socialism and discuss the welfare state, past and present.

Professionally, she is a professor of sociology emerita of the University of Delaware. She has been a fellow of the European Union Institutes for Advanced Study and the Gerontological Association of America as well as a senior research fellow of the Center for Population, Poverty and Public Policy Studies (Institute of Socio-Economic Research) in Luxembourg.

Join us to discuss the issues. Please watch for a pop-up Zoom notice with a link to the meeting.

From the president: Happy Thanksgiving!

By **Cathy Chowenhill**
Co-president

We've almost made it through 2020! I hope you received the digital Recipes of the Pandemic booklet. It's full of recipes and stories from our members about these last pandemic months that we've all experienced.



Cathy Chowenhill

If you didn't receive it in your email, let me know and I'll send another copy (cathychowenhill@comcast.net).

A big thank you to all of you who submitted items! I hope you can use some of the recipes to make Thanksgiving special, even if you're not having your traditional Thanksgiving this year.

One of the things I've always loved about Thanksgiving is that gift giving is not expected. Many of us are at an age where we don't need – in fact, don't want – any more "things." And yet, December is one of those

months filled with gift-giving opportunities! Family and friends are trying to find gifts that we would love.

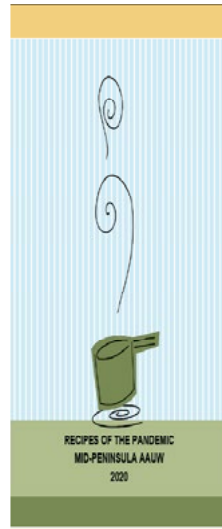
How about trying this:

Let your gifting circle know that a gift you would like to have (other than hugging them!) is a donation to an organization or non-profit in your name.

Be specific about the groups you support. You could even list them on your online wish list, if you have one. There are so many groups to choose from, and I'm sure you have your favorites that you are passionate about.

This would be a gift that is meaningful for you, easy for your family, and critical for the organization. Everyone is happy!

Take care of yourselves. There is not too much of 2020 left, so let's finish it off safely! Happy Thanksgiving!!



Who? What? When?

Co-Presidents: Cathy Chowenhill (cathychowenhill@comcast.net) and Carole Farina (cfarina@alumni.stanford.edu)

Membership: Vicci Mueller (591-5444)

Distribution: Ellen Van Creveld (591-0814)

Electronic distribution: Cathy Chowenhill

Triad editor: Micki Carter (mickicatr@gmail.com)

Sunshine Lady: Marge Haruff is our Sunshine Lady. Please contact Marge at mharuff@aol.com or 592-9900 if you know anyone who would appreciate a card from Mid-Pen Branch.

Know of a prospective member? Please contact Vicci Mueller (viccim@aol.com).

Board Meeting: Tuesday, Dec. 1, at 11 a.m. via Zoom.

Triad Deadline for February will be Jan. 15. Please send articles in Word format and photos as large-format JPEGs to Micki Carter (mickicatr@gmail.com).

BackTalk

Have something you want to put before your Mid-Pen sisters to elicit ideas and opinions?

Have a bone to pick with the world at large or just your AAUW branch?

Email your thoughts to the editor at mickicatr@gmail.com with BackTalk in the subject line.

Help for the food insecure

There is hunger in San Carlos, Redwood City and San Mateo County.

Small businesses such as the dry cleaners on Laurel Street have seen their business plummet by 70 percent. Employees have been laid off, and those remaining have had their hours drastically cut to the point where they are begging for hours because they have no food.

I know this because I have been talking to business owners.

The newly hungry are the people who served and cooked our meals at the restaurants we patronized; they are the people who cleaned our homes, worked at the dry cleaners and the hair salons, who walked our dogs. They need our help.

Surely, at this time of year, with the holidays coming up, we can do something to make a difference to people's lives, beyond our own.

Make a donation to an organization that gives food or start a fundraiser as I have. I can show you how.

Let's make a difference for the neediest in our community. Let's show them we care. Here are some links to make it easy:

- [Second Harvest](#)
- [Ecumenical Hunger Program](#)
- [Puente](#)

Carolyn Chambers

Political or partisan?

Kathi Harper, AAUW California Public Policy co-chair, says it is important to

continually remind ourselves that "AAUW is non-partisan, but we are political. These are very different things.

"Partisanship means endorsing a partisan candidate or a party's platform. We do not do that in our messages.

"Being political means we advocate for our values. We can refer to our mission statement and our Public Policy Priorities, which are member-driven."

As a fact-based, mission-driven organization we have a responsibility to research, educate and communicate on issues that bear directly on equity for women.

Through increasing public knowledge and influencing policy, AAUW strives to make the world a better place.

Carole Farina

Give to AAUW in honor of Vice President-elect

By Carolyn Miller

Today we celebrate Kamala Harris, the first woman Vice President-elect of the United States of America.

We as AAUW members should feel so proud that our organization helped to put her there. This a profound moment for women's rights. Her election will break a glass ceiling. She, like AAUW, is a pioneer in the fight for women's equality.

Harris was district attorney for San Francisco and went on to become California's attorney general. Her next step was to senator and now Vice President-elect. An amazing career!

AAUW has played a big part in her path. We should feel so proud. Just as our Nov. 7 speaker, Beth von Emster, said, "Justice must prevail."

Today we still remember the passing of Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She was a pioneering jurist and iconic feminist who blazed new trails in the lives of countless women that she championed and inspired. AAUW rec-

ognized her in 1999 with AAUW Achievement Award. Her mission and that of AAUW are the same.

As associate justice of the United States Supreme Court, she was instrumental in making Virginia Military Institute co-ed. Also she argued Obergefell v. Hodge, granting same-sex couples the right to marry in all 50 states.



Kamala Harris

Please honor Kamala Harris and the memory of Ruth Bader Ginsburg by making a donation to

AAUW.

Let us keep working to help other women who are trying hard to follow in the footsteps of these two great women.

Donate online by going [here](#). Put in

the amount and then your member number which is on the front of your directory and be sure to add "in honor of Kamala Harris" or "in memory of Ruth Bader Ginsburg."

Or send donation to me at 4 Goodwin Court, Redwood City CA 94061. Questions? Call 650-365-0208.

Your donation will be recognized in The Triad and by national AAUW unless you specify otherwise.

Gift instead of gift-wrapping?

As of press time, we do not know if we will be wrapping gifts at Keplers this year. Many members who normally participate may not feel it is safe to do so.

We are suggesting that in lieu of your time, you might consider a donation to Greatest Needs Funds.

You can donate online or send them to Carolyn Miller at 4 Goodwin Court, Redwood City 94061.

January speaker to talk about Village Movement

Scott McMullin of the Village Movement will speak to the Mid-Peninsula branch via Zoom at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 23.

McMullin is one of the cofounders and volunteer leaders of Villages of San Mateo County. He also serves on the San Mateo County Commission on Aging and the Paratransit Coordinating Council. He says he is dedicated to the proposition that our cities should be age-friendly for all ages.

He and his wife Shirley live in San Carlos, and while they love the Zoom connections with family, they look forward to returning to the day of physical visits with their children and grandchildren.

McMullin describes the Village Movement this way: "Joyful and productive lives, surrounded by a loving community, aging with dignity and grace in the comfort and safety of our own homes."

"Isn't that what we all want? It is a worthwhile goal, and it describes the mission of Villages of San Mateo County (VSMC), a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded and operated by local citizens."

VSMC is the umbrella organization for three local villages: Sequoia Village serving

older adults from Redwood City to Belmont, Mid-Peninsula Village from San Mateo to Burlingame, and Village of the Coastside from Half Moon Bay to Montara.



Scott McMullin

The national village movement started in Boston in 2002 and today has more than 250 independent grass-roots villages across the country.

Villages are membership-based organizations supported by volunteers and community partners. Local villages have been oriented toward direct services as well as social connections. Before COVID, the primary service was transportation, and volunteer drivers gave more than 5,000 rides to members during 2019.

A home-safety inspection is provided for every new member, and that usually leads to a number of projects to improve safety (smoke alarms, grab bars, handrails, better lighting, and so on). Social gatherings and educational excursions are also frequent and popular.

"The pandemic has caused us to modify our services and activities, and we have found ways to do this successfully and safely," McMullin said.

"More of our membership have been introduced to the wonders of the internet world, and safety protocols have allowed us to give rides to medical appointments and to provide in-home services for home safety and other urgent needs."

"We are an aging nation, and San Mateo County is no exception. It is estimated that 25 percent of our county population will be over the age of 65 by the year 2030."

"Government services and home care agencies will not be able to handle all of the needs, but we can band together to help each other as we write the next chapters of our lives."

For more information, click [here](#).

New interest group on climate change is forming

Climate Change

We meet the second Monday of each month at 3:30 p.m. The next Zoom meeting will be Dec. 14. At this meeting we will share information on local climate change/environmental non-profit organizations for partnership opportunities. If you would like to be part of this group, please send your name and email address to Sherry Booth, boothsherry1@gmail.com.

Book Bunch

We meet by Zoom on the second Friday of the month (Dec. 11) at 12:30 p.m. Contact Cheri Sullivan to join (cheryl.sullivan@gmail.com or 217-840-6627). In December we will be discussing *The Soul of an Octopus* by Sy Montgomery. In January (Jan. 8) we will be discussing *Nutshell* by Ian McEwan. Everyone is welcome! Please come with book suggestions for upcoming meetings.

French Conversation

Bonjour! Our meeting is set for Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 2 p.m. Mirna Hirschl will be setting up Zoom for us to get together. Please plan on signing on! For more information, contact Laverne Rabinowitz at Lrainbow24@yahoo.com.

Spanish Conversation

From November through April, Spanish Conversation will meet by Zoom on the first Monday of the month from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Leonor Urbain will send the link. After April the group will decide if this meet-up plan will change. If you are interested in further information, contact Leonor at Lurbain@comcast.net.

Public Policy

Local attorney Beth von Emster will join the Public Policy meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 24, at 3 p.m. During this conversation, you can ask her questions relating to her Nov. 7 presentation on Women's Rights in America and on her or the ACLU views about the election process. Bring your own opinions too and let's discuss them. A Zoom email invitation will be sent prior to the meeting date. Watch for an email from Yvonne Bergero (ybergero@mac.com) containing the link to join.

Hiking

The group continues to meet on Thursday mornings. There's renewed interest in spending time together! Members of the group suggest walks, hikes, routes and the time and place to meet, and then someone

leads and does the emails for that week. Stephanie Katz is the contact (stk4@lehigh.edu).

Great Decisions

This discussion group meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month to discuss current foreign policy topics. The discussions are based on articles from the booklet *Great Decisions*, which is published annually by the Foreign Policy Association. This month's article is No. 6 — China in Latin America on Nov. 25. The *Great Decisions* section will need new leadership and a new place to meet beginning in January 2021. Please email Lois Monroe at loismonroe@gmail.com if you are interested in taking over leadership of the group.

Women in Literature

This section is on hold until further notice.

Historic Preservation

This section is on hold until further notice.

Public Policy lists bills of interest that passed

By Yvonne Bergero

- Nov. 25 is United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. It will feature 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, ending Dec. 10.
- In the United States, the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 expired and the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2019 was introduced, passed the House and sent to the Senate as S.2843, where it is awaiting action.
- AAUW California Public Policy has hired a new advocacy firm, MVM Strategy Group. It will take over strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and political insights.

11 California bills passed in 2020

- AB 732 — Regulations for "dignified health care" for incarcerated pregnant women before and after birth.
- AB 1185 — Authorizes counties to establish oversight boards for law enforcement agencies.
- AB 1196 — Prohibits law enforcement agencies from using carotid artery or chokeholds.
- AB 1506 — Creates a Department of Justice Review Board to investigate police killings upon request from a law enforcement agency.
- AB 1927 — Sexual assault victims can't be prosecuted for drug/alcohol offenses from assault trial testimony.
- AB 2416 — Homeless students can

- get financial aid even if they can't meet "satisfactory progress" requirement
- AB 2762 — Prohibits sale of adulterated cosmetics.
- AB 3070 — Creates assumption of prejudice when non-white jurors are excluded.
- AB 3121 — Creates a Task Force to make recommendations on reparations to Blacks.
- SB 973 — Requires companies with 100+ employees to report pay data on employees by sex and race.
- SB 1383 — Provides all employees right to take unpaid leave in excess of vacation time to enroll child in school and attend school activities or address school emergencies

Half Moon Bay Harbor photo by Sherry Booth



Talking climate change: New monthly feature

By Sherry Booth

No doubt, it is difficult to talk about something as variable and complex as climate change — some areas will be hotter, some wetter, some drier — and when we talk about it, we aren't always talking about the same thing.

Professor Mike Hulme of Cambridge University wrote *Why we disagree about Climate Change* (2009), a groundbreaking work that examines the different ways we frame climate change.

He writes, "I deliberately present climate change as an idea as much as I treat it as a physical phenomenon that can be observed, quantified and measured. ..."

"Climate change has moved from being predominately a physical phenomenon to being simultaneously a social phenomenon."

While this short quote only presents a small part of his argument, his analyses raised questions that have been pursued in different ways by different groups.

Below are some links to articles that address some of the complexities of talking about climate change and Americans' views of climate change.

Mike Hulme [article](#) about his 2009 book. [Pew Research Survey](#) on how Americans see climate change:

This next link features [Katharine Hay-](#)

[hoe](#), a leading scientist in climate change who is touted as one of the best speakers on the subject. She is an Evangelical Christian and a climate scientist — and knows how to engage all types of folk, including Evangelicals. She believes talking about climate change is important and necessary for change to happen.

National to double your 2020 giving

From AAUW National

Thank you for standing up for equity during this tumultuous and difficult year.

If you're feeling weary about the divisive election, relentless pandemic and struggling economy, you're not alone. But we must keep fighting for the one thing that can get our nation past this pain: a country where everyone is treated equally.

That's why, through Dec. 31, AAUW's board, committee leaders and staff will match — dollar for dollar — every donation, now up to \$40,700, giving your year-end gift twice the impact.

This will be the second match of 2020 from volunteer leaders and staff, who also raised a substantial sum in the spring. Their generosity in this time of hardship heartens us all. You've shown you're capable of extraordinary change through your actions, activism and kindness. And extraordinary

Finally, with President-Elect Biden having campaigned on climate change, this article from [The Atlantic](#) discusses five ways to think about Biden and climate change.

If you are interested in joining the conversation, we have a new section, Climate Change. Just email me at boothsherry1@gmail.com

effort is exactly what's needed right now.

With your doubled gift, we will:

- Demand Congress approve long-overdue financial relief to the millions of Americans devastated by the pandemic, which disproportionately harms women and people of color.

- Push policymakers to pass the paid leave and equity laws that women and people of color desperately need to endure this crisis without losing their jobs or being forced to work sick.

- Offer career development programs, tools and networking to women who are low-wage workers, students and recent college grads.

- Center racial equity in all of our work.

Please, if you can, give today. It's only when we have a truly equitable society that we can heal the deep wounds that hurt us all.

Neighborhoods plan to celebrate the holidays!

Neighborhood 1

The Neighborhood 1 holiday get together will be a cocktail/wine Zoom party Monday, Dec. 28, at 5 p.m. This will be a time to show off your special holiday decorations. We'll chat and catch up on what we have been doing the last months and then we'll take a Zoom tour of the holiday decorations in members' homes. Marie Wolbach suggested this idea, and it sounds like fun. She's already getting excited to decorate! An email will be sent out with the Zoom invitation during the week before the party. Thanks, Nancy Crampton

Neighborhood 2

Neighborhood 2 will have a Zoom holiday celebration on Thursday, Jan. 7 at 3 p.m. Before the party, each NG2 member will receive a gift, delivered by your chairs. Don't open the gift until the party when we'll all open our gifts at the same time and see where we go from there. Much merriment is planned for all as we say goodbye to 2020

and welcome to 2021. A link to the Zoom will be emailed in the week before the celebration. Contact Cynthia Ford for further information.

Neighborhood 5

Yes, I am still at it! The "it" being trying to keep all of us in our neighborhood group connected! Please save the following dates on your calendars for Zoom gatherings in December and January. They are:

Monday, Nov. 30: After 1 p.m. a surprise will be delivered to your home. You will receive a phone call at least 15 minutes before it arrives.

Tuesday, Dec. 1, 4 p.m.: Zoom Holiday Party. Have your surprise with you to enjoy alone with everyone else!

Friday, Jan. 1, 4 p.m.: Zoom 2021 New Year Celebration! Show up with festive hat, horn, alcoholic or non-alcoholic bubbly and a blessing for the new year! I am looking forward to our time together!

Victoria Kline

Neighborhood 8

Our usual get-together during the holidays is, of course, not possible this year. Many of the neighborhoods are planning to meet via Zoom in early January just to wish each other a Happy New Year and check to see that we've gotten safely through 2020. I propose that we meet by Zoom on the afternoon of Saturday, Jan. 2. Let's make it at 2 p.m. Just a friendly gathering to start a new and perhaps better year for us all. More details later. Best wishes, Margot Diltz

Neighborhood 10

Neighborhood 10 will be Zooming together for a Holiday Cocktail Party on Wednesday, Jan. 6, at 5 p.m. We are choosing to look forward with enthusiasm, rather than belabor the shadows of a very challenging year. We offer our best wishes to all in this New Year!

Thank you, Susanne Burrill

Girls4STEM webinars offered for high school young women

The Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch is excited to present an entirely new STEM project, Girls4STEM Webinars, a series of webinars for high school girls featuring young professional women in STEM fields.

The Girls4STEM webinar series is launching on Sunday, Nov. 22. This webinar series introduces women working in STEM fields to high school girls who, at this stage of their lives, are making choices about high school coursework, in preparation for potential college majors and STEM careers.

The presenters share their education and career paths, discuss their actual job activities, and provide tips for getting college internships and jobs after college.

Girls4STEM is free and open to all high school girls. Webinars will be offered 1-2 times per month on Sunday afternoons for up to 500 attendees.

AAUW-OML is presenting this series as part of our community outreach projects, designed to advance equity for women and girls. A report published by USA Facts on

Oct. 16 says that while more women are earning STEM degrees than 10 years ago, women still earn only 32.4 percent of STEM degrees awarded.

Our goal is to encourage high school girls to take STEM classes and major in a STEM field in college. This webinar series is made possible by a generous grant from the Bettelheim Family Foundation.

We are asking for your help to recruit high school girls to register for the webinars.

Click [here](#) to find out more about the webinars, including bios of the presenters and the link for registering for each webinar. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.



Three new members of Mid-Pen introduced

Take every opportunity to welcome the following new members:

Sally Bould

4300 Paul Sweet Road C202
Santa Cruz CA 95065
831-346-6512
salbould@aol.com

Interested in French and Social Policy

Sally is a close friend of Carole Farina. She speaks French well having lived in both Geneva and France. She was commissioned to write on the status of women in several European countries and is interested in both our French and Social Justice sections.

Angela Mogin

10 Ninth Ave. #201
San Mateo, CA
amogin45@gmail.com

Leila Esmaeili

633 Elm Street, #414,
San Carlos CA 94070
(H) 408 476-5938
rx.leila@yahoo.com,

Megaphone

Continued from Page One

Von Emster pointed to a recent situation that the ACLU has been involved in: the two-year-old University of California/Dignity Health partnership in which the Catholic Dignity Health has been able to institute restrictions and gag orders on UC doctors who practice in its hospitals. “The ACLU believes these restrictions invalidate women’s reproductive rights.”

During the Q&A, Mid-Pen members questioned how such an arrangement could be allowed to continue since UC is a government entity. “Separation of church and state is a critical issue here,” von Emster said. “The partnership is ongoing but there is an opening here. The partnership documents haven’t yet been finalized.”

But she bore down on some significant issues here in San Mateo County. “Did you know that Black people are eight times more likely to be arrested than whites in this county? Or that our sheriff cooperates with ICE, turning people over to them at the completion of their sentence. Most California counties don’t do this.”

She emphasized the need to be active on the local level, to find out the policies of local officials and compare those policies to the opinions of the electorate. “San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe diverges from his voters on the death penalty, which he supports. But county voters rejected the death penalty by a 15 percent margin.”

She reminded the group that “down ballot races, including the sheriff and district attorney will be up re-election in 2022. Inform yourself about their positions and that of their rivals.”

Von Emster urged her listeners to pay close attention to local issues and be alert to local civil liberties violations. Report those violations at <https://www.aclunc.org/our-work/get-help>.

“You provide the voice,” she said. “We’ll provide the megaphone.”

She ended her presentation with a list of links that can be helpful in creating awareness of our civil liberties:

- [ACLU of Northern California](#)
- [ACLU North Peninsula Chapter](#)
- [ACLU of California Legislative Scorecard](#) rating state legislators
- [Meet Your DA](#) tool

4 Pillars of Our Rights

<p>U.S. & California Constitutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom of Speech Right to Privacy <p>Federal & State Civil Rights Laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil Rights Act of 1964 Paid Family Leave 	<p>Supreme Court</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roe v Wade Marvin v Marvin <p>Executive Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> US, California, Local
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Step 1: Educate Ourselves

Get on email lists, social media, websites of every politician who represents us

Follow women’s organizations via email alerts, websites, social media, webinars







Step 2: Take Action

VOTE up and down the ballot!

Take Opportunities from Women’ Orgs **You provide the voice. We’ll provide the megaphone.**

Contact Your State and Local Reps

If you learn of a civil liberties violation, report it!
 ACLU hotline: <https://www.aclunc.org/our-work/get-help>

We provide all the tools you need to call or send messages to your members of Congress, contact your state legislators about pressing issues, and more.

Gender pay gap? New Zealand has a new idea

New Zealand is determined to close the gender pay gap and it has a idea that just might work. This is an excerpt of an article by Anna Louie Sussman of the New York Times.

While Americans were obsessing over the results of the presidential election, a New Zealand law aimed at eliminating pay discrimination against women in female-dominated occupations went into effect. The bill, which takes an approach known as “pay equity,” provides a road map for addressing the seemingly intractable gender pay gap.

Unlike “equal pay” — the concept most often used to address gender pay disparities in the United States — the concept of “pay equity” doesn’t just demand equal pay for women doing the same work as men, in the same positions. Such efforts, while worthwhile, ignore the role of occupational segregation in keeping women’s pay down: There are some jobs done mostly by women and others that are still largely the province of men. The latter are typically better paid.

But if the coronavirus has taught us anything, it is that what has traditionally been women’s work — caring, cleaning, the provision of food — can no longer be taken for granted.

“It’s not the bankers and the hedge fund managers and the highest paid people” upon whose services we’ve come to rely, said Amy Ross, former national organizer for New Zealand’s Public Service Association union. “It’s our supermarket workers, it’s our cleaners, it’s our nurses — and they’re all women!”

It has also taught us how poorly these jobs are compensated. Over half of workers designated essential in the United States are women; their jobs are typically paid well below the median hourly wage of a little over \$19 an hour. (Median hourly pay for cashiers is just \$11.37; for child care workers it’s \$11.65; health support workers such as home health aides and orderlies make \$12.68.)

Instead of “equal pay for equal work,” supporters of pay equity call for “equal pay for work of equal value,” or “comparable worth.” They ask us to consider whether a female-dominated occupation such as nursing home aide, for instance, is really so different from a male-dominated one, such as corrections officer, when both are physi-

cally exhausting, emotionally demanding, and stressful — and if not, why is the nursing home aide paid so much less? In the words of New Zealand’s law, the pay scale for women should be “determined by reference to what men would be paid to do the same work abstracting from skills, responsibility, conditions and degrees of effort.”

What is at stake is not just a simple pay raise but a societywide reckoning with the value of “women’s work.” How much do we really think this work is worth? But also: How do we decide?...

In 1972, New Zealand passed an equal pay law that could have, in theory, required a pay-equity type approach: The law included a provision calling for equal compensation for work “exclusively or predominantly performed by female employees” with “the same, or substantially similar, skills, responsibility and service ... under the same, or substantially similar, conditions and with the same, or substantially similar, degrees of effort” as work performed by men. But courts, until recently, interpreted the provision narrowly: to mean equal pay for identical work.

Then, in 2012, Kristine Bartlett, a caregiver who had worked for more than 20 years in an old age home making barely above minimum wage, filed a claim with the Employment Relations Authority against her employer, TerraNova Homes and Care. TerraNova relied on traditional equal pay logic in its defense, arguing that it paid its four male caregivers the same as its 106 female caregivers.

The claimants asked the court to take a pay equity approach instead and to look more closely at the actual nature of the work. They argued that caring for elderly people was just as demanding and dangerous as better-paid jobs mostly performed by men, including, notably, prison guards. One filing by Ms. Bartlett’s union noted that both jobs require “dealing with challenging behaviors including sexual behaviors and/or aggression.”...

Before the claim was settled, Ms. Bartlett was earning \$15.75 (U.S. \$11.20) an hour, 50 cents above the New Zealand minimum wage, for work her union estimated was worth \$26 (U.S. \$18.50) an hour.

Bartlett’s claim was settled out of court

through a three-way negotiation between union officials, employers and the government in 2017, resulting in pay increases of 15 to 49 percent for 55,000 workers (paid for by the government, which funds elder care in New Zealand through contracts with private firms and NGOs). The outcome sparked a wave of new claims throughout the public sector from other female-dominated occupations, including midwives, social workers and school support staff. The same year, the newly elected Labour government, led by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, set to work: The government would follow through on her party’s campaign promise to amend the 1972 law to finally deliver true pay equity.

Read the whole article [here](#).

Work Smart workshops scheduled in December

Two AAUW Work Smart workshops are scheduled in December.

The webinar Asking for More on Dec. 1 and 8 will help you learn your value and train you to negotiate with confidence.

Register [here](#).

The Work Smart salary negotiation workshops are hosted by the Friends of the Commission on the Status of Women, San Francisco, facilitated by AAUW National and funded by the AAUW San Francisco Branch.

The webinar is open to all, across California and beyond. Please pass along this valuable opportunity.

Grantwriting your skill?

Help! I am looking for some one who knows or is interested in writing grants. Please call Carolyn Miller 650-365-0208 or e-mail me at mfmiller34@aol.com if you can help.

CA-AAUW office moving

Our California State office is moving at the end of November. Please note it in your Directory. The new address is:

AAUW California, 915 L St., Suite C, Box 418, Sacramento, CA 95814

New phone number: 916-389-0220