



empowering women since 1881

The TRIAD

Mid-Peninsula Branch

Summer 2021

Volume 66 Number 9



Masks come off, hats come out as neighborhoods party!

More photos and an article on the salute to summer appear on Page 3.



From the co-presidents



Co-presidents Cathy Chowenhill and Carole Farina pass the gavel.

Mid-Peninsula has been busy, with a purpose, this past year

By Cathy Chowenhill and Carole Farina

Thank all of you for a wonderful two years as your co-presidents. We loved working together as a team and getting to know so many more of you!

This year of seclusion has, oddly, brought us closer to our fellow AAUW members. Learning a new technology to meet online, addressing current issues in our monthly meetings and those of neighboring branches, gathering virtually within neighborhoods and sections, and participating in projects have kept us busy with a purpose.

Our officers and chairs are to thank for providing the opportunity for us to feel connected and have a robust branch. Two of our board positions now have co-chairs of staggered terms where one is new and the other has had a year of experience.

During the summer, neighborhoods and sections can continue to meet and may take advantage of continuing with Zoom or going outdoors. It is a time to revive dormant

sections and create new ones. What piques your interest?

It is a time as well to consider diversity and inclusion. Besides race, gender, economic or educational status, points of view are diverse. Let's hone our listening skills and try better to understand differing views.

For fun, we are compiling a trivia quiz on AAUW or branch facts and/or involvement, and facts about areas of our concern.

For example: The court case Ledbetter vs Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. was about . . .

1. Gender discrimination
2. Disability discrimination
3. Contract versus employee status
4. Unpaid sick leave.

Correct answer is #1.

Get your neighborhood and your section busy on this. The earlier we have your entries, the earlier we can send it out. Please send in a question with four answers and with the correct answer noted to Carole Farina.

Have a good safe and healthy summer!

Who? What? When?

Co-Presidents: Carole Farina (cfarina@alumni.stanford.edu) and Susanne Burrill (susanneburrill@hotmail.com)

Membership: Wilma Hoffmann (wilmahoffmann@icloud.com)

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Triad editor: Micki Carter (mickicartr@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 Wilma Hoffmann (wilmahoffmann@icloud.com)

Board Meeting + Installation of Officers: Tuesday, June 1, at 11 a.m. via Zoom.

Triad Deadline for September will be Aug. 15. Please send articles in Word format and photos (separately, not embedded in Word) as large-format JPEGs to Micki Carter (mickicartr@gmail.com).

Some Mid-Pen summer dates to keep in mind

June 15 — Program ideas brainstorming via Zoom at 10 a.m.

June 30 — Last day to renew membership

Aug. 15 — Articles due to Micki Carter for September Triad

Sept. 18 — September General Meeting

Celebrate new officers

Our last meeting of this AAUW year will be held Tuesday, June 1, at 11 a.m. on Zoom.

We'll start off with a very short board meeting, followed by the installation of our new branch officers.

Come and celebrate the new board for next year, and give them your support!

Following this, we will have time to chat and socialize. The Zoom link will be sent out a few days before the meeting.

No masks, just vaxxed members reconnecting

By Wilma Hoffmann
Neighborhood 4

Having established that we were all fully vaccinated, we decided that the time had come to meet in person.

Some of us even HUGGED!!!! Such excitement!

Barbara Regello had enthusiastically responded to the initial email, essentially "Have coffee cake, will travel," and I provided tablecloths and drinks.

Not that either was necessary. We were all so pleased to see each other, all of us, not just our Zoom heads, and in such a pleasant environment as the tables beside the Bocce Ball Courts in Burton Park in San Carlos.

We have decided that we will continue to meet monthly, at least until the Pandemic makes all our other social engagements feasible and no one has time any more.

We are so lucky both to be able to meet, and to anticipate the future with pleasure.



By Sally Mellinger
Neighborhood 3

Neighborhood 3 spent a lovely few hours having lunch together for the first time since the pandemic.

We had our vaccines so we celebrated with sunflower corsages and much laughter and smiles. A good way to enjoy each other's company.



Upper left, Pat Ivester and Jean Dehner; above, Nancy Batten; and left, Ann Fleishman and Clare Gadella

Supporting AAUW through gifts to the Funds Program

By Nancy Oliver

AAUW has a long and distinguished history of advancing the quality of life for women and girls.

The Funds Program includes Educational Opportunities (American and International fellowships and grants to further higher education and research, and Tech Trek), Legal Advocacy (eliminating discrimination in the workplace), Eleanor Roosevelt Fund (generating AAUW's very respected research reports), Leadership Programs (Start Smart. Conferences, etc.), and Public Policy (government relations, lobbyist, field organizing). The Greatest Needs Fund simply utilizes donations where they are needed most.

AAUW Funds even reach our own branch: Endowment funds named for our branch members:

- Betty McGregor International Fellowship Endowment: (active in branch and state, as both EF and Membership Chairs)
- Marie Wolbach American Endowment (dual member with Palo Alto; active in branch, state, and national; founder of Tech Trek)
- San Carlos Branch Golden Jubilee Research and Projects Endowment (in celebration of our 50th birthday)

In addition, Community Action Grants, Branch Recipients:

- Dianne Wasson, (to develop an extensive school nutrition program)

- Caroline Fisher and Sally Cochrane (to develop local history teaching kits for our schools).

Many branch members have made contributions to the funds. The amount given by the branch determines how many Named Gift Honorees we can have. (These honorees are branch members who are chosen for their contributions to the branch and community, and in whose name our donations are given to the Funds.)

Actually, all branch members have donated, because \$2 of your dues goes to the funds — \$1 each to Educational Opportunities, and Legal Advocacy. Go to AAUW.org to find out more about these programs.

Public Policy

What are the chances of the For the People act?

By Yvonne Bergero

Is elimination of voter suppression our current civil rights movement?

The Senate has begun debating S1, the For the People Act, and it's not a moment too soon.

HR1 passed the House in March and, since then, many state officials have been working overtime to roll back the simple, commonsense measures that allowed our country to conduct a safe and secure election this past November. S1 may be the only thing that can stop them.

As of March 24, legislators have intro-

duced 361 bills with restrictive provisions in 47 states. That's 108 more than the 253 restrictive bills tallied as of Feb. 19 — a 43 percent increase in little more than a month.

- Five restrictive bills have already been signed into law.

- Fifty-five restrictive bills in 24 states are moving through legislatures.

- Twenty-nine have passed at least one chamber.

On a positive note, there has been push back. During the same timeframe, pro-voter legislators are seeking to make permanent the changes that led to the biggest voter

turnout in over a century. In 47 states, 843 bills with expansive provisions have been introduced (up from 704 bills as of Feb. 19).

Of these;

- One hundred nineteen bills with expansive provisions are moving in 31 states.

- Nine have passed both chambers and are awaiting signature.

- Forty-one have passed one chamber.

- Sixty-two have had some sort of committee action.

**Resources: Brennan Center for Justice & New York University School of Law*

Some of the organizations working to expand voting rights for Americans

These national organizations form a potent force to protect American elections and help citizens register, get voter IDs and vote.

[ACLU](#) (American Civil Liberties Union)— Defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

[ADVANCEMENT PROJECT](#) — A next generation, multi-racial civil rights organization.

[ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH ORGANIZING](#) — Grows progressive people power across America by empowering local young people's organizations.

[BLACK VOTERS MATTER FUND](#)— Goal is to increase power in marginalized, predominantly Black communities. Effective voting allows a community to determine its own destiny.

[CAMPAIGN LEGAL CENTER](#) — Advances democracy through law, fighting for every American's right to participate in the democratic process.

[CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT](#) — Works with universities, community colleges, faculty, students and election officials to reduce barriers to student voting.

[CENTER FOR COMMON GROUND](#) — Empower underrepresented voters to fully participate in elections.

[COMMON CAUSE](#) — Holding Power Accountable.

[DEMOCRACY WORKS](#) — Serving Voters, Powering Elections with tools (TurboVote, Ballot Scout, Voting Information Project) needed to upgrade the infrastructure of our democracy.

[DEMOS](#) — A dynamic "think-and-do" tank

that powers the movement for a just, inclusive, multiracial democracy.

[ELECTION PROTECTION 866 OUR](#)

[VOTE](#) — Works year-round to ensure that all voters have an equal opportunity to vote and have that vote count.

[FAIR ELECTIONS CENTER](#) — Promotes voting rights and election reform for traditionally underrepresented constituencies through litigation and legal expertise.

[FAIRVOTE](#) — A national non-partisan, non-profit organization focused on electoral reforms, including ranked choice voting.

[LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS](#) — Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

[MI FAMILIA VOTA EDUCATION FUND](#) — Working to unite the Latino community and its allies to promote social and economic justice through increased civic participation.

[NAACP](#) — National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

[NATIONAL ELECTION DEFENSE COALITION](#) — Secure American Elections from cyber-threats.

[NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD FOUNDATION](#) — Public education and grants to legal projects engaged in the defense of political and civil rights.

[NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY](#) — Celebrated on the fourth Tuesday of September by volunteers and organizations in a single day of coordinated field, technology and media efforts.

[RECLAIM THE AMERICAN DREAM](#) — An informational website to help Restore democracy, Reduce Inequality.

[ROCK THE VOTE](#) — Building the political power of young people.

[SPREADTHEVOTE.ORG](#) — We get IDs for every day of the year + election day.

[STUDENTS LEARN STUDENTS VOTE.ORG](#) — Dedicated to increasing student voter participation.

[THE UNITED STATES ELECTIONS PROJECT](#) — To inform the people of the U.S. how their electoral system works, how it may be improved, and how they can participate.

[THE VOTER PARTICIPATION CENTER](#) — Register and Mobilize the Rising American Electorate.

[THE VOTING RIGHTS ALLIANCE](#) — Restore and protect American Voting Rights and ensure every vote is counted.

[TRANS LIFELINE](#) — A peer-support hotline that offers microgrants to trans people for legal name changes and updated government identification documents.

[VERIFIED VOTING](#) — How will my vote be counted?

[VOTE.ORG](#) — Everything you need to vote!
[VOTEATHOME.ORG](#) — Ensuring the integrity of our elections and putting voters' needs first..

[VOTERIDERS](#) — VoteRiders is making sure no eligible citizen is denied his or her right to vote for lack of ID.

[WHEN WE ALL VOTE.ORG](#) -Fighting for fair, safe, and accessible voting for all Americans. (Joined Civic Nation in March 2021.)

Did you know?

The United States is the only major democracy in the world that requires individual citizens to shoulder the onus of registering to vote.

Climate Change

What can each of us do about climate change?

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. -- Margaret Mead

By Cynthia Ford

What can I do to stop global warming?

That question comes to mind for most everyone who's concerned about climate change. Since climate change is a complex problem with a number of potential solutions, and since it can be addressed at the personal, local, state, and federal levels, it's not simple to know where one person can begin to help.

Here are a number of resources with good ideas for things you can do.

The Natural Resources Defense Council is a non-profit organization with over 700 lawyers and scientists who work to protect the planet's natural systems. See their [article](#) on what individuals can do.

Local governments are also working on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. [Here](#) are varied ideas from Austin, Texas:

Right here at home, the San Mateo County Office of Sustainability has a rich set of [resources](#) on home electrification that will help you reduce your home's greenhouse gas footprint.

While our individual actions can have a real impact on the planet's climate, they're not enough to eliminate greenhouse gases. Bill Gates recently published "How to Avoid A Climate Disaster," a thoughtful approach to climate change. Here's a brief [excerpt](#) from it that he published on his blog. It not only has ideas for what you can do at home, but also how you can influence business and government.

There are many ways for each of us to help, so enjoy being one of the "committed citizens" Margaret Mead describes in the quote above.

Chance to hear speaker on environmental health

The Los Altos/Mountain View Branch has invited us to their meeting on the environment at 2 p.m. on May 27.

Email c.noonan@yahoo.com with "Yes, Please" and the name of your branch if you would like to attend:



Phyllis Hesik offers her solar clothes dryer as an easy first step.

This invitation is about environmental health, which was just added to AAUW CA Public Policy Priorities. It's time we heard how we might take action locally.

Since it's easy to Zoom in on events that may be too far to attend on site, we're inviting you to join our last event of the AAUW year.

Our speaker, Jasneet Sharma, Santa Clara County Director of the Office of Sustainability, will join our branch via Zoom. Although some of you are in San Mateo County as well as Santa Clara County, you may be interested. The issues affect the entire peninsula.

You can let c.noonan@yahoo.com know you're interested and be added to the Evite up until the day before the event.

Microplastic pollution in a single basket of laundry

A single load of laundry can release 700,000 plastic microfibers from our clothes. They have become "pervasive in the environment" from marine animals, fish and birds to our farmlands and into us.

What is California doing and what can

we do to address the varied plastics problems? Read about it [here](#).

Our planet's determining decade: Facing the facts,

Jane Goodall.

Alexandra Cousteau.

Dolores Huerta.

It's about you. It's about us. It's about the future of our species. Listen to a [virtual summit](#) hosted by the Nature Conservancy with conservation leaders, scientists, policymakers, and advocates to help show the way forward.

If you are short on time, listen to Alexandra Cousteau's [comments](#).

All about Harbor Seals

Who doesn't love watching baby seals frolic in the ocean while mom just wants a nap?

Did you know they are nocturnal? [Learn](#) about their habits, threats to their survival and how data is gathered at Point Lobos and Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

Mid-Pen's Named Gift Honorees for 2021

Donations will be made to Greatest Needs Fund in their names.

Pat Ivester

We are honoring one of our members today who richly deserves this honor. Our member grew up in Flushing, Mich., and attended Western Michigan State earning a BA. She then came west to Cal Berkeley for a BS in Science.

She taught for many years in San Mateo as a junior high math, science and sex ed teacher.

She has a daughter and two sons and was very active in their school life as they grew up. In their high school years, she was a Drum Line Mom and worked concessions at football



Pat Ivester

games. She also has a granddaughter in Boston and our member has been reading to her and helping with learning during this pandemic.

Our member spends about nine months out of every year serving AAUW as director of Tech Trek Camp Curie at Stanford, which she has done since 2013.

According to those who have worked with her, she is an incredible caretaker of people, places and programs. She strives to support the growth and comfort of others; she is so kind, organized and knows everyone and everything about Tech Trek.

Her counterpart director at Camp Hopper said, "Tech Trek at Stanford simply would NOT have happened in the past several years without her tireless efforts in hiring teachers, recruiting volunteer staff, purchasing equipment and supplies, preparing for campers' medical needs and more.

When a girl has had a problem, and there have been problems every year, as a longtime teacher and mentor, our member

has the instincts to handle the situation in a manner that creates the best outcome for the girl, does not affect the rest of the girls, and keeps the camp running smoothly.

Before becoming director, she taught the math core classes at both Curie and Camp Hopper, starting in 2008. She gave the girls so many great challenges and the tools to solve them so that their confidence in their math ability skyrocketed. Girls made the most amazing 3-D puzzles and were engaged in solving complex math problems.

Here are some comments from the girls and staff members:

"Patient with hyper-energetic teenage girls and anxious camp staff."

"Tech Trek helped me realize that I was smart and powerful enough to have a career in STEM, and she makes it possible for girls to discover themselves and increase their confidence."

"I observed her handle challenges with wisdom, experience and humor."

This fall she is returning to her roots in Flushing. She will be greatly missed by those who worked with her at camp. However, if there turns out to be an in-person camp in 2022, we can all hope the lure of Tech Trek might convince her to return.

Please join us in honoring this very deserving member, Pat Ivester. A donation in her honor has been made to the Greatest Needs Fund.

Carole Farina

This year we are honoring another very deserving member of our Branch. Let's take a trip down memory lane to learn what we can about her.

She was born in Southern California, but, as a Navy Brat, lived in many places, including Guam and Virginia.

As a kid, her family settled in the North Bay, where she developed close friends, and had fun riding bikes. Her friends remember her hosting the best slumber party, where they practiced the latest dance steps.

In high school, she was on the rally committee, in the French Club, and participated in drama and theater productions. She was a member of the California Scholarship

Federation and was treasurer for that club. She carpoled to high school in her friend Beanie's car, nicknamed Tubby (the car, not the friend!).

Of course, she took college prep courses and was noted in the yearbook as top female student of her class. For some reason (which remains a mystery) the yearbook staff predicted she would become a butcher!

She earned a BA from Stanford Uni-

versity in economics. She was a Forms Analyst at the Del Monte Corp., and, after her two daughters were older, she worked at Catholic Television Network for 12 years. As



Carole Farina

an office manager, she was a program designer and scheduler.

This member is an avid gardener, and chef. She volunteered at Filoli for years in the library. She has a love of nature and the outdoors. She was an avid tennis player until an injury did not allow her to continue, but she is an active member of the hiking group. She played Mah Jong until Covid put an end to those get-togethers.

She and her husband have traveled the world; it would probably be easier to tell you where she hasn't been, than where she has!

She served as branch Membership VP for three years, recruiting and welcoming new members. And she now has led our branch as co-president for two years, capably planning and leading our branch through this pandemic. She enthusiastically encourages members to get involved in activities that align with AAUW's mission.

We could not be more pleased to announce this year's contribution to AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund in the name of Carole Farina!



Honoring Earth Day

Members of the Mid-Pen Hiking Section brought bags to carry away trash as they gathered on Bair Island for an Earth Day clean-up. Below, others traveled to Gamble Garden in Palo Alto to look for native plants for flower and vegetable gardens and the native narrow-leaved milkweed (lower left) essential for Monarch butterflies. Carolyn Chambers, Elvira Monroe, Cynthia Ford, Wilma Hoffmann, Yvonne Bergero and Carole Farina discussed how the plants would work in their gardens.



Why not start a new section?

By Lois Monroe, Sections Chair

After so many months of sheltering in place, many of us are eager to explore new ventures. A new interest section in our branch might be inspiring for our members, and could center on any topic that piques interest. It could focus on native gardening, music, play reading, basic technology, finance and more. New sections are easy to start, so share your ideas and we can get some new sections off the ground!

Public Policy

Our May 25 meeting will be an in-person gathering at the home of Barbara Regello, 209 Stevens Court, San Carlos from 3-5 p.m. The meeting will be a note writing campaign to our Senate representatives in support of For the People Act. Supplies will be provided as well as sample scripts and names and addresses of representatives. Wearing of masks is up to attendees' discretion; those not vaccinated please adhere to CDC guidelines. Please let Barbara know if you will be attending — (650) 595-1630 or email theobarb@comcast.net. Refresh-

ments will be served. Note: There will be no meeting in June.

Historic Preservation

Enjoy the free virtual presentation of the Courthouse Docket (San Mateo County Historical Museum) on Saturday, June 26, at 3 p.m., where panelists will review Three Great Estates. Register [here](#). Other viewable presentations are available at the website, including mini-walking tours in the county. More Courthouse Docket programs will occur during the summer. Many museums are now opening for in-person visits.

Women in Literature

We would like to resume this section, where we read books written by or about women. Contact Nancy Oliver if you'd like to be part of this group.

Out-to-Lunch Bunch

If you'd like to resume having lunch together at local restaurants, contact Nancy Oliver.

Mid-Pen earns its Five-Star status from national

Mid-Pen Branch received this letter from Nichia P. McFarlane of national AAUW:

Dear AAUW Mid-Peninsula (CA) Branch,

I hope this finds you all safe and well! I'm happy to share that your branch achieved a star in the Advancement area of the Five Star National Recognition Program. Congratulations! AAUW Mid-Peninsula is a 5-star branch.

As we continue to navigate the impact of COVID-19 on women's health and economic security it's more important than ever that we do what we can to achieve a future where women and girls are afforded equality of opportunity. Your commitment to the future of your branch and generous contributions to support AAUW's mission will ensure that we can continue the fight for gender equity and be able to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Your branch will be featured in the May 2021 national Membership Matters news hub and recognized on the national website as a 5-star branch. I also look forward to meeting you all in your virtual leadership briefing with AAUW CEO Kim Churches.

Thank you all for your participation and all of your work to support AAUW's critical mission.

Author of Kamala Harris book to speak to Mid-Pen in the fall

By Kathy Mountain

A recently published book by Dan Morain on our new U.S. vice-president, Kamala Harris, reveals her fascinating rise to power. He will be discussing his book, *Kamala's Way: An American Life*, at our Saturday meeting in September.

In her recently elected position she is a woman of significant achievement in her career. As the first woman to be elected vice-president, she is also the first person of color, as the daughter of immigrants from India and Jamaica.

Morain describes Harris as "smart, politically savvy, and someone who makes few mistakes. If she doesn't understand an issue,

she is not shy about asking questions. She is also strategic, thinking many steps ahead and doesn't take stands without considering the implications.

"That will serve Biden and the nation well."

The author is a veteran journalist who has worked 27 years at the Los Angeles Times and eight years at the Sacramento Bee where he was editorial page editor.

All members are encouraged to learn about Harris' history-making career by reading this timely biography before our September meeting with the author on Zoom.

The date and time will be announced in the September Triad.

