



Mid-Pen members Judi Kerfoot, Nancy Crampton and Carolyn Miller brought balloons and birthday cheer to Pat Holvick-Knudson (right) who celebrated her 100th birthday in November. Pat joined AAUW in 1950 as a founding member of the Menlo Park-Atherton Branch and later joined the San Carlos/Mid-Peninsula Branch. She has been a member of Neighborhoods 2 and then 1 since then. Carole Farina joined the group and took this photo.

## Tech Trek's back and searching for a director

By Sherry Booth

We have good news to share about our wonderful Tech Trek program for 2022!

State and national AAUW have committed to in-person camps for next summer, barring unforeseen circumstances. Many details are still unknown as State has appointed a new director for California Tech Trek (Karen Manelis), and she is still working on the many details to get everything up and running. We should have more information by sometime in December.

BUT....we need your help. Pat Ivester, our fabulous Marie Curie camp director, has moved and cannot continue in that position. Kea Jolicouer, who has co-directed with Pat for several years, will continue to co-direct if she has a local person to take Pat's place. If we cannot help find this person, then

there will be only one week of Tech Trek at Stanford next summer.

In the past, two camps ran at Stanford back-to-back: Marie Curie for a week and Camp Hopper for a week. If we lose one week of camp, we would probably have to send fewer girls. In the past we have sent about nine girls, and we don't want to see that number cut back.

One other change concerns the selection of campers from area schools. We have 10 schools in our Mid-Pen area, and managing the principals, teachers, and students at so many schools has become untenable.

To help with this situation, the Board agreed to the proposal submitted by the Tech Trek Branch Coordinators (Barbara Haas, Carolyn Seffens and me) to rotate the schools every other year (i.e., five schools one year, five the next), balancing the

numbers of students each year.

This will also help in planning if we end up with only one week of camp instead of two. A number of branches use this rotation method, and Manelis said it is perfectly acceptable.

If you know of a woman who loves working with seventh-grade girls, has a math or science background, lots of energy, and is willing to take on the job of co-camp director, please let us know!

It is a bit like finding a unicorn, but someone is out there. We just need to find her!

Contact me ([boothsherry1@gmail.com](mailto:boothsherry1@gmail.com)) if you have someone in mind, but check with her first. It does indeed take a village to run Tech Trek!

Thank you for helping us out.

## From the co-president

# Check out all that National AAUW is doing in your name

By Susanne Burrill

This message has taken a very long time to write because I have become totally engrossed in the contents of my subject which you will find by going to the AAUW National webpage [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) and choosing the News and Insights tab and then the AAUW Weighs In: Policy Updates. There you will find the source of my fascination: Letters, Comments, Testimony and Legal Briefs. You will be invited to “learn more about AAUW’s positions and advocacy efforts regarding economic security, civil rights, and education.”

Ladies, unless you have visited this section before and explored it, you may not believe the extent of AAUW’s involvement in these areas and may possibly develop additional admiration for our organization and pride in what it has participated. For example, these are letters which AAUW has recently signed and sent to:

- Senate Calling for Support of Cloture Vote on John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act [11/3/21]



Susanne Burrill

- President Biden Calling for Cancellation of Student Debt Before Payment Pause [10/28/21]
- Congress Supporting Higher Education Investments in Build Back Better Package [10/27/21]
  - White House and Congress Urging Inclusion of Child Care, Paid Leave and the Child Tax Credit in Build Back Better Act [10/8/21]
  - Congress in Support of Protecting Paid Leave, Child Care and the Child Tax Credit [CTC] in Build Back Better Act 10/8/21
  - The Chamber of Commerce Business Roundtable Urging Support for Care Provisions in Reconciliation Bill [10/4/21]
- Congress Urging Members to Co-sponsor the Safe Schools Improvement Act [SSIA] 9/24/21]

These are only the letters that AAUW has signed in the last month! Below them on the web page are legal briefs relating to

## Who? What? When?

- Co-Presidents:** Carole Farina ([cfarina@alumni.stanford.edu](mailto:cfarina@alumni.stanford.edu)) and Susanne Burrill ([saburrill123@gmail.com](mailto:saburrill123@gmail.com))
- Membership:** Wilma Hoffmann ([wilmahoffmann@icloud.com](mailto:wilmahoffmann@icloud.com))
- Electronic distribution:** Cathy Chowenhill ([cathychowenhill@comcast.net](mailto:cathychowenhill@comcast.net))
- Triad editor:** Micki Carter ([mickicarter@gmail.com](mailto:mickicarter@gmail.com))
- Sunshine Lady:** Marge Haruff is our Sunshine Lady. Please contact Marge at [mharuff@aol.com](mailto:mharuff@aol.com) or (650) 591-9900 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](mailto:wilmahoffmann@icloud.com))
- Board Meeting:** Tuesday, Dec. 7, at 11 a.m. via Zoom.
- Triad Deadline for February** will be Jan. 15. Please send articles in Word format and photos (separately, not embedded in Word) as large-format JPEGs to Micki Carter ([mickicarter@gmail.com](mailto:mickicarter@gmail.com)).

the categories of Civil Rights, Economic Security and Education and Title IX, and also Letters and Testimony submitted to Congress since 2019!

I have found this to be an exciting resource and vast fund of current and recent information and events.

# BackTalk: A ray of hope for the monarchs

By Carole Farina and Elvira Monroe

“There is a ray of hope for the vanishing orange-and-black Western monarch butterflies,” according to Haven Daley and Olga R. Rodriguez of the Associated Press.

They say that a preliminary count this year showed more than 13,000 monarchs have arrived at a site in Pacific Grove where none appeared in 2020. Clustering together on pine, cypress and eucalyptus trees, they spark hope among the Monterey Grove Sanctuary’s volunteers and visitors that the struggling insects can recover.

Western monarch butterflies head south from the Pacific Northwest to central

California and Baja each winter, returning to the same places and even the same trees, where they cluster to keep warm.

Last year’s count of a mere 2,000 is thought to be due to climate change, habitat destruction and lack of food caused by drought. Better breeding ground conditions may have influenced the increase, and there may have been an influx of Eastern monarchs which occasionally happens.

“Scientists estimate the monarch population in the eastern U.S. has fallen about 80% since the mid-1990s, but the drop-off in the Western U.S. has been even steeper,” down to more than 99% with

farming and climate change being the main drivers.

Monarch butterflies lack state and federal legal protection to keep their habitat from being destroyed or degraded. Last year, they were denied federal protection, but the insects are now among the candidates for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Local efforts are being made to plant native milkweed which is necessary for monarchs to eat and breed. If you live more than five miles from the coast, your native milkweed plants can help butterflies and bees regain their health.



Members of the Walk/Talk & Gawk section (The Hikers) gather around a unique tree sculpture in San Mateo during a walk for a photo.

## Diversity, equity, inclusion are focus of the reading of ‘The Color of Law’

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion group of San Francisco-AAUW has invited Mid-Pen to take part in their four-part discussion of the book, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein.

We are invited to join them via Zoom at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 29 (chapters 4-7), Jan. 26 (chapter 8-10), and Feb. 23 (chapter 11-epilogue).

Here’s the link for the [Zoom](#) sessions. The Meeting ID is 863 5836 9906, and the passcode is 996441.

AAUW’s efforts to create diversity, equity and inclusion within our organization

and the larger society we live in, call for us to consider how to make holiday celebrations more meaningful and inclusive.

We are encouraged to be respectful of different religious holidays, consult interfaith or multicultural calendars before scheduling, and be aware of different dietary and cultural needs.

Within our own branch we have a DEI Committee of Barb Finnegan and Phyllis Hesik. If you would like to be on the committee or have suggestions on how to improve Mid-Peninsula Branch in these areas, please give them a call.

## Japanese emigrant experience topic of first talk of 2022

Rosalyn Tonai, executive director of the National Japanese American Historical Society, will discuss Japanese immigration, the Japantown Settlement in San Francisco and incarceration of the Japanese during World War II at 1 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 19, via Zoom. Mid-Pen will join San Mateo Branch for this meeting.

Tonai has served the Historical Society since 1990. Under her directorship, it has produced numerous exhibitions, public programs and documentaries that have had national impact.

Together with the National Park Service/ Golden Gate National Recreation Area and The Presidio Trust, NJAHS has developed the MIS Historic Learning Center, an adaptive re-use project at Building 640.

This historic site preserves the unique story of the first U.S. Army Language school which secretly trained mostly Japanese American linguist soldiers one month before the attack on Pearl Harbor.



Rosalyn Tonai

At this national interpretation center, the dual stories of the military exploits of the Nisei Military Intelligence Service (MIS) and the Japanese American WWII incarceration experience are told. As a promise to the MIS, this special place is dedicated to peace and reconciliation.

NJAHS offices are currently headquartered in San Francisco’s Japantown, where Ms. Tonai serves on the executive committee of the Japantown Task Force, a preservation and planning body for one of the last remaining Japantowns in the U.S.

Tonai received her master’s degree in nonprofit management from the University of San Francisco’s College of Professional Studies. She holds a BA degree from UC Berkeley.

## Public Policy

# AAUW-CA sets its Public Policy Priorities

AAUW-California has published its Public Policy Priorities for 2021-2023. Here's an overview:

### Economic Security for all women

- Equity in the workplace
- Enforcement of anti-discrimination statutes
- Security in retirement
- Access to job training for career development
- Work-life balance, including access to quality affordable childcare and paid sick and care-giving leave

### Equal Access to Quality Education

- Vigorous enforcement of Title IX
- Adequate and equitable funding at all educational levels, including pre-school and post-secondary
- Instruction in STEM fields
- Opposition to the use of public funds for schools that do not meet public school civil rights and accountability standards

### Social and Racial Justice for All

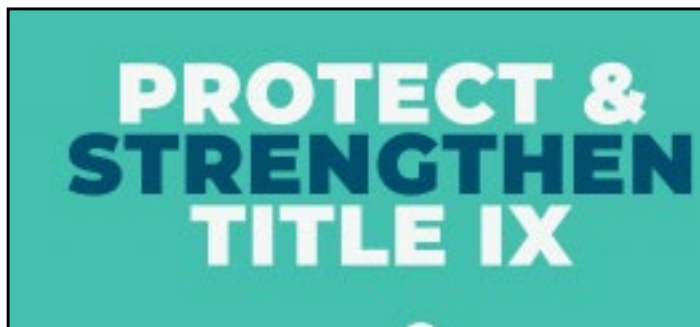
- Self-determination in reproductive health
- Equal access to quality affordable health care, housing and a healthy environment
- Freedom from violence in all its forms and whenever it occurs including racially motivated violence
- Guarantee of civil and constitutional rights for all, including all forms of identity and expression, and all family structures
- Protection and expansion of voting rights
- Support for United Nations Sustainable Development Goals which address human and women's and girls' concerns

The basis for AAUW California's Public Policy Priorities are consistent with National Public Policy principles, which can be found on the national [website](#) and are updated every two years with input from membership.

### Updates from AAUW California

#### By Kathi Harper, Co-Chair

Abortion Justice: Although the constitutionally guaranteed right to an



abortion has been systematically under attack for decades, it is currently in danger of disappearing altogether.

As AAUW National recently noted, "Every person should have the ability to make their own informed decisions regarding their reproductive life. It is beyond time for abortion to be secured legally, funded fully, and equitably available for all who need it, when they need it, without shame or stigma."

With the recent refusal of the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene in the onerous Texas case, it is clear that we can no longer count on the courts to protect this critical right.

Congress must pass the Women's Health Protection Act.

Watch for Action Alerts from National, use them to keep pressure on your representatives, and sign-up now for the Two-Minute Activist if you haven't already done so by clicking [here](#).

### Legislative Updates

Our last five priority bills that were awaiting the Governor's signature have been acted on, here are the results

**SB 62** (requires fair pay, instead of "by the piece" payment, for garment workers) SIGNED

**AB 367** (free menstrual products must be provided in girls/women's bathrooms in schools) SIGNED

**AB 887** (allows domestic violence restraining orders to be filed electronically) SIGNED

**AB 123** (increases paid family leave benefits to 65–75% of regular pay) VETOED

**AB 1074** (requires hotel and janitorial workers who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic to be prioritized for hiring as businesses reopen) VETOED

Source: [publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org).

### International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (Nov. 25)

Why this international day?

- Violence against women is a human rights violation
- Violence against women is a consequence of discrimination against women, in law and also in practice, and of persisting inequalities between men and women
- Violence against women impacts on, and impedes, progress in many areas, including poverty eradication, combating HIV/AIDS, and peace and security
- Violence against women and girls is not inevitable. Prevention is possible and essential
- Violence against women continues to be a global pandemic.

More information is available [here](#).

### Human Rights Day (Dec. 10)

Human Rights Day is observed every year on Dec. 10. It commemorates the day on which, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In 1950, the Assembly passed resolution 423 (V), inviting all states and interested organizations to observe Dec. 10 of each year as Human Rights Day.

It starts with each of us. Step forward and defend the rights of a refugee or migrant, a person with disabilities, an LGBT person, a woman, a child, indigenous peoples, a minority group, or anyone else at risk of discrimination or violence.

Read more about it [here](#).

## Climate Change

# Exactly why shouldn't I have a gas stove?

By Wilma Hoffmann

There are the obvious reasons regarding the environment and the use of fossil fuels in general.

We are destroying not the planet, but certainly the planet as a habitable environment. That, of itself, is a pretty good argument. But it's not if you are replacing a gas stove with an electric one, and the electricity is being created by power plants using fossil fuels or nuclear energy with its attendant problems of waste disposal.

(Marilyn Zack reported that work is being done to make nuclear plants better, even to helping solve our water problems at our last Climate Section Meeting.)

So let us assume that the electricity is coming from solar, wind or tide sources, all of which do have negative effects on the environment but are not as bad.

Are there any other reasons to electrify? Absolutely. Some right within our own home!

I'm going to quote from a letter written

to the Menlo Park City Council by Rob Jackson who studies natural gas (methane) emissions and the global methane cycle — as a professor at Stanford and as chair of an international group called the Global Carbon Project. It was written in support of the goal of the Environmental Quality Commission of Menlo Park to get to 95% of existing structures in Menlo Park electrified.

“As background, methane (natural gas) is a far more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. A pound of methane warms the earth 30 times more than a pound of carbon dioxide over a century and almost 90 times more over the first 20 years after its release.

“In fact, (a recent) report estimates that methane emissions caused one third of global warming over the last decade. Methane concentrations in the atmosphere also jumped more last year than in any year of the past 35.

“Jackson and his students have measured methane emissions in hundreds of Bay Area

homes from appliances, including stoves, furnaces and water heaters. Stoves not only emit and leak methane into the air of our homes, but they also release pollutants such as NOx, carbon monoxide, and, in much smaller quantities, formaldehyde and benzene.

“Electrifying our homes will help the climate and make us healthier.”

I have occasionally smelled gas in my home, but had no idea there were other noxious gases being emitted into my living space as well. Put it all together and it is a strong argument to electrify our homes.

Jackson made a final interesting point. Less affluent people will need help in getting their homes electrified, “but if wealthier communities such as Menlo Park can't act, who can?”

That sentiment can be extrapolated to countries around the world on many issues, not the least of which is help with the pandemic!!

## Neighborhood groups make holiday plans

Sally Mellinger

Co ordinator of Neighborhoods.

The Mid-Pen Neighborhoods have announced their plans for holiday gatherings.

**Neighborhood 1** will be having their annual get-together in the winter of 2022. More information to follow for the members. Nancy Crampton reporting

**Neighborhood 2** is planning their holiday gathering on Monday, Dec. 6, at 1 p.m. They will be meeting at Bistro Vita, 641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park. Judi Kerfoot reporting.

**Neighborhood 3** is looking forward to a holiday lunch at The Office Restaurant on Wednesday, Dec. 8, 1748 El Camino Real, San Carlos, at 11:30. a.m. The Office has an indoor-outdoor eating area with

good air circulation and fire pits. It's informal and helpful for air flow. Bring something small to share if desired. Sally Mellinger reporting.

**Neighborhood 4** is meeting for a pot luck party at the home of Barbara Haas on Dec. 15. Wilma would like to thank her neighborhood for being vaccinated, willing to meet indoors with air flow, being prompt in replying to her emails and offering help. She will share photos in the next Triad. Wilma Hoffman reporting.

**Neighborhood 5** will be meeting at a local San Carlos restaurant to support the city. The date is November 30th. More information to follow for the members of Neighborhood 5. Victoria Kline reporting.

**Neighborhood 7** will be meeting on Dec. 15 for lunch at Divino Ristorante in Belmont. Carolyn will confirm the time with members attending. Carolyn Seffens reporting.

**Neighborhood 8** is finalizing their plans for early January. More information will be given to the members after the holidays. Margot Diltz reporting.

**Neighborhood 10** is meeting on Zoom soon to make plans for their gathering in the New Year. Members will be informed. Susanne Burrill and Joyce Inouye reporting.

New co-chairs for **Neighborhood 10** are Diane Beu and Kathy Mountain.

## Interest Sections

# Do you have any interest in interest sections?

### All About Food

The Food Section will not meet until Thursday, Jan. 27, when we will explore less common plant foods and the impact of growing common foods. Contact Carole Farina at [cfarina@alumni.stanford.edu](mailto:cfarina@alumni.stanford.edu) if you'd like to join.

### Book Bunch

New and old members are always welcome to join the Book Bunch on the third Friday of the month at 10 a.m. Contact Wilma Hoffmann ([wilmahoffmann@icloud.com](mailto:wilmahoffmann@icloud.com)) for details. Some meetings are Zoom only; others in-person with a Zoom option available for those who prefer it. Vaccination is required for all in-person attendees. If you do not have the link, email Wilma.

**Nov.19:** Mikki Coffino ([mikkicof@att.net](mailto:mikkicof@att.net); 650-341-2428) will lead us in a discussion of *The Lost Girls of Paris* by Pam Jenhoff. It will be a Zoom only meeting. Please RSVP to Mikki. Contact Wilma to get the link.

**Dec.17:** The charming bestselling book by Amor Towles, *A Gentleman in Moscow*, will be the topic of conversation. Please come to the home of Ruthie Wilkins at 10 a.m. Please bring books to give away or trade, but no textbooks or out-of-date travel guides, please. We shall have a book exchange. Tea, coffee and Russian tea cakes will be served. Friends and significant others are invited to join us! RSVP by email to [ruthiewilkins1@gmail.com](mailto:ruthiewilkins1@gmail.com) so she may know how many to expect. Her address is 134 Iris St., Redwood City, CA 94062, between Brewster and Hopkins, near Sequoia Hospital and Sequoia High School, Ruthie's phone number is (650) 208-9935.

**Jan. 21:** Sally Mellinger will lead the discussion of *Four Winds* by Kristin Hammer at the home of Sue Schmid, 786 Kent Ave, San Carlos. RSVP to both Sue ([sueann21@comcast.net](mailto:sueann21@comcast.net)) and Sally ([mellingersal@yahoo.com](mailto:mellingersal@yahoo.com)).

**Feb. 18:** A discussion of *Braiding Sweetgrass – Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer will be led by Wilma Hoffmann in her home, 909 Crestview Drive, San Carlos. RSVP to Wilma.

### Public Policy

Public Policy is not meeting in December. We will resume meeting on Tuesday, Jan.25, from 3-5 p.m. We will review in general AAUW California's Public Policy Priorities on Page 4 of this Triad and specifically the omission of support of the Equal Rights Amendment. We will also continue the discussion from November's meeting and solicit ideas for action items locally, in state and nationally. Please join us to voice your opinions and help us grow Mid-Peninsula's Public Policy Section. Look for an email announcement for the meeting's particulars prior to the meeting date. We look forward to your participation.

### French Conversation

Our group will celebrate the holidays with luncheon out on Wednesday, Dec. 8, at 1 p.m. Then we will have our regular meeting on Jan. 11 at 1:30 p.m. Please contact Laverne Rabinowitz ([Lrainbow24@yahoo.com](mailto:Lrainbow24@yahoo.com)) for location details.

### Climate Change

November's Climate Change meeting was lively, fascinating and informative on the topic of desalination presented by Marilyn Zack. While there are many advantages to desalination, there are also many serious problems with the current technologies, particularly threats to ocean

## Note of thanks from Paradise Branch

Mid-Peninsula Branch received this note from the Paradise Branch:

"As the Nov. 8, 2018 Paradise Camp Fire anniversary nears, those of us who received so much help from AAUW members in California and elsewhere want to give an update and renew our thanks.

"One small plea posted on the AAUW California website and a few emails asking for help brought tens of thousands of dollars in gift cards, offers of housing, furniture, and, in the case of a member who couldn't get her garage door open and had no replacement insurance — a car.

"The Paradise board, all of whom

life. Thanks, Marilyn, for educating us on this important topic.

There will be no meeting in December.

Monday, Jan. 10, we will meet via Zoom at 3:30 pm. The link will go out the weekend prior. The topic is a book, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. Shelley was quite well educated in the science of her time, and one of the very first (and not just a woman first!) to ask hard questions about technology — particularly the perils that can result from it. If you would like to join us, please email Sherry Booth at [boothsherry1@gmail.com](mailto:boothsherry1@gmail.com) to be added to the list. Happy holidays to all, and we will resume in 2022. Enjoy reading (or re-reading) a classic.

### Walk/Talk & Gawk

Beth Swanson suggested a new name for the Hiking Group which we all appreciated: Walk/Talk & Gawk. The group continues to meet on Thursday mornings. 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](mailto:stk4@lehigh.edu)).

### Spanish Conversation

This section is in the process of reorganization, Look for new information next month. Contact Teddy Heinrich ([teddyhei@aol.com](mailto:teddyhei@aol.com)) for details.

(except yours truly) lost everything, gathered frequently to sort mail and distribute the contributions to 35 of our 40 members.

"After their needs were fulfilled, we gave cards and checks to our Tech Trek families, most of whom also lost everything and often had fewer resources. We offered gas money to the son of Suzy and Paul Ernst, the couple who were trapped by the fire and spent many months in the U.C. Davis Burn Center. There were so many ways everyone's contributions helped.

"From all of us, thank you!"

Carol Holzgrafe and every AAUW Paradise member



## All About Food samples all-vegetarian dishes



Plant-based cooking and eating occupied the All About Food section in October. Carole Farina (upper left photo), Wilma Hoffmann, Elvira Monroe, Victoria Cosley Kline, Cynthia Ford and Theoni Pappas were on hand to talk food and taste. Contact Carole if you'd like to join them.