



San Mateo County Sheriff Christina Corpus spoke to Mid-Pen and San Mateo branches at Redwood Shores Library March 11. The hospitality team provided an artful arrangement of goodies as well. More photos and an article appear on Page 7.

Afghan grant recipient to speak at Annual Meeting

Faheema Eissar, an AAUW Scholarship recipient, will speak at the Mid-Peninsula Branch Annual Meeting at 2 pm on April 15, via Zoom.

A young woman from Afghanistan who is currently finishing her master's degree at the University of San Francisco, she will discuss the challenges and successes that have brought her to this place in her life.

At the Annual Meeting, the branch will elect new officers, present the AAUW Fund Named Gift Awards to two Mid-Pen members, and vote on bylaws amendments as well.

For the past two years, Faheema Eissar received an international fellowship from

AAUW. The grant supports her studies in International and Development Economics and her thesis on post-conflict economic recovery.

Eissar knows conflict. She grew up under Taliban rule which prevented her from attending school until she was 12 years old. "I have lived in a conflict zone all my life," she said.

In July 2021, she left Kabul for USF. The very next month the Taliban returned to power. In September, the Taliban government closed the country's ministry for women's affairs,



Faheema Eissar

fired female staff members and renamed the building the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. This ministry regulates how women dress and whether women can move outside the home unaccompanied by male relatives.

"Today, I would not be able to leave the country for graduate school," Eissar said. "And if I were to remain there, I would not be allowed to study anything — let alone economics."

At USF, she decided to study economic
See ANNUAL MEETING, Page 3

President's Message

During Women's History Month we take stock of our successes

By Chris Panero

It's National Women's History Month, and this month's branch activities have provided opportunities to celebrate, learn and support AAUW's mission to advance gender equity for women and girls.

Tech Trek and the Betty Torrez Memorial AAUW Scholarship support local girls:



Chris Panero

Over the last three years, due to Covid and sticky layers of new technology, Tech Trek has been a scramble, but the Tech Trek committee has persevered, prodded, reminded and encouraged the local schools to

participate. Their efforts have met with success, and we will be sending girls to in-person camp as well as virtual camp this summer.

In January, your board voted to pilot a \$1,000 scholarship for a girl from Sequoia High School, funded by the bequest from long-time member Betty Torrez. After two months of research and phone calls to other AAUW branches, we found that the most efficient solution was close by: the college counselors at Sequoia were equipped to handle nearly the whole thing. See elsewhere on this page for details about our new Betty Torrez Memorial AAUW Scholarship, and how we would like to move forward.

We advocate and support women who live and serve in our community:

Our March 11 in-person meeting was a wonderful talk by our new sheriff, Christina Corpus, whose talk was by turns moving, inspirational and vexing.

We also heard from the enthusiastic leadership Healthy Cities Tutoring about their mission, needs and successes.

We were reminded via flyers on our chairs from Outreach Chair Yvonne Bergero

that Grateful Garment advocates for and supports victims of sexual violence in our community.

We also received bookmarks to help us publicize Equal Pay Day. The bookmarks tell us that, once again, when compared to all workers, women are paid just 77 cents for every dollar paid to men. Thank you to Carole Farina and Micki Carter for composing and printing the bookmarks, and encouraging us to distribute them.

And lastly, early in March, our local Interbranch Council hosted a rousing virtual presentation by Preethi Fernando about her new book, "17 Women Who Shook the World." Her appearance was in honor of International Women's Day on March 8.

Short take:

I visited the Domini Hoskin pop-up museum in Redwood City to see the amazing collection of Black history and culture.

Getting scholarships to girls in need, thanks to the gift from Betty Torrez

By Carole Farina and Chris Panero

Soaring college costs, years of debt, starving students! The news is not encouraging for those with ambitions of a college degree and a yearning to find worthwhile work. We can help, in a small but significant way, to ensure that girls with financial need and merit can succeed with their educational goals.

Many of us remember Betty Torrez, our branch president from 1992-95 and an active member until recently. She generously bequeathed Mid-Peninsula \$10,000. A proposal to dedicate the funds to a scholarship was approved by the Mid-Pen board in January with the amount of \$1,000 to go to a graduate of one high school as a pilot program.

How do we select the girl and the school? Do we need a foundation? Many questions ensued for the committee of Chris Panero, Margot Diltz and Nancy Oliver to research. They were happily surprised to find that a

Who? What? When?

Co-Presidents: Carole Farina and Chris Panero

Membership: Wilma Hoffmann and Barb Finnegan

Electronic distribution: Cathy Chowenhill

Triad editor: Micki Carter

Sunshine Lady: Marge Haruff. Please contact Marge if you know anyone who would appreciate a card from Mid-Pen Branch.

Know of a prospective member?

Please contact Wilma Hoffmann or Barb Finnegan

Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 4, at 10 a.m. via Zoom.

Triad Deadline for May will be April 15. Please send articles in Word, Pages or Google.doc and photos (separately, not embedded) as large-format JPEGs to Micki Carter.

Among the many memorable people highlighted, I found LaDoris Cordell. Judge Cordell will be at our in-person meeting on May 13 to tell her story.

process in place at Sequoia High School that fit all our criteria, is easy on everyone, and is accomplished almost entirely by the school.

The Sequoia Scholarship Committee will select a recipient: a girl who has financial need, exhibits merit, and is going to a 2- or 4-year college. The money is sent to the girl's college to be given to her after enrollment.

We will be connecting with other high schools within southern San Mateo County to expand our outreach. In the meantime, our scholarship effort has launched! A check for \$1,000 has been sent to Sequoia High School for the Betty Torrez Memorial AAUW Scholarship.

Help wanted!

We would like to further develop the Betty Torrez Memorial AAUW Scholarship, to take it into other local high schools and perhaps to the community colleges. Interested? Please contact Chris Panero.

Officer nominees for coming year

On April 15 Mid-Peninsula Branch will meet by Zoom for its annual meeting. We will elect officers for next year.

The nominees are:

President: Chris Panero

Vice President Programs: Bernie Mellott

Vice President Membership: Barb Finnegan and Stephanie Katz

V-P Membership Treasurer: Mary Spring

Treasurer: Amy Armstrong

Administration/Financial Secretary:

Kathy Rafael

Recording Secretary: Margot Diltz

OFFICIAL NOTICE Mid-Peninsula Branch Bylaws Amendment

Background: Due to the increasing difficulty of finding members to serve on the board, a committee proposed the elimination of certain positions with the requirement to be on the board. At its meeting on November 1, 2022, the Board accepted the proposals and voted on the following changes to the Branch Bylaws: 1) to eliminate the position of Director-at-Large; 2) that the Vice President AAUW Funds be appointed, not elected. 3) to eliminate the member-of-the-board requirement for the currently appointed Board positions of Interest Section Coordinator and Public Policy Chair.

Branch members will vote on the bylaws change at the Annual Meeting.

Proposed changes: (see bold strike-through words to be removed):

ARTICLE X. OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers:

a. The elected officers shall be a president; vice presidents for program, membership, ~~& AAUW Funds~~; secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, ~~and director at large~~.

b. The appointed officers shall be ~~general sections, public policy,~~ Tech Trek, parliamentarian, and others as deemed necessary to the work of the branch. They shall be appointed by the president with the consent of the board.

ARTICLE XI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Composition. The board of directors shall include the elected officers and the following appointed officers: ~~general sections, public policy, and~~ Tech Trek, with the parliamentarian serving as a non-voting member.

Annual Meeting

Continued from Page One

development in the wake of conflict.

“I want to focus on something that prepares me both mentally and academically for the time when I can go back and do some kind of work for my country,” she said.

At the end of her first year at USF, Eissar applied for a second AAUW fellowship. She

received it for the current academic year.

“My fellowship and the curriculum at USF are exactly aligned,” she said. “Right now, I’m focusing on Uganda and the post-war reintegration of abductees and those who have been exposed to war crimes.”

Eissar is studying Uganda because “I can’t get data from Afghanistan right now, and Uganda was a conflict zone for a long time, so focusing on Uganda can help me

learn what I need to.”

Economics became a focus because “economics is a practical science, and what my country needs.

“I came to USF because I want to learn to do things that will actually help, not just in theory but in action — to know how to tackle a specific problem.”

Eissar said the USF program is just what she was looking for. “I love the skills that I’m learning, the challenges that I go through, and the support that I get. At USF it’s not just about finishing the program; it’s about learning — and it’s about understanding that you belong.

“Right now, I would not want to be anywhere else in the world. In continuing my education, I kind of feel like a representative of millions of girls in my country who have been banned from going to school.”

Marilyn Zack is on the mend

Marilyn Zack has suffered a stroke and is now at home resting. We are all grateful that she is home, and we send our best wishes for her full recovery. If you’d like to send a card, Marilyn’s is the last entry in the Mid-Peninsula Directory.

Upcoming Webinar

Celebrating Diversity Month

Thursday, April 6, at 11 a.m. PDT

Please join the national Inclusion and Equity Committee’s virtual webinar on Thursday, April 6, from 11 a.m. to noon PDT. The webinar is designed to aid local branches and states as they prepare to celebrate Diversity Month in April and the World Day for Cultural Diversity on May 21. The webinar is designed to be interactive, with ample opportunities for participants to make suggestions and ask questions. Please join us on April 6.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Grateful Garment Project is personal for Yvonne

By Yvonne Bergero

This is personal. And here is why:

I was startled when Sister Maura called me out of my classroom that day and told me I had an emergency telephone call. She took over the class so that I could take the call.

On the other end of the line was a nurse with horrific news — my best friend had been the victim of a kidnapping and sexual violence attack. My friend needed clothes, she said, and she instructed me to come to the ER at Kaiser in South San Francisco with the clothes.

I did so and saw my friend shaken and in tears in the exam room. Through tears she tried to tell me what happened; she was attacked and then kidnapped at gun point from her garage.

Her assailant then drove her across town and down 280 with the gun barrel pointed in her ribs. She escaped when the car needed gas and slowed down on an off-ramp enough so that she was able to tumble out of the car. A parked policeman saw this and called it in.

Then began a multiple car police and Highway Patrol chase after the rapist/kidnapper that resulted in a car crash and his capture.

This attack and kidnapping could have been worse. My friend had images of the Zebra murders that were plaguing San Francisco at the time. A co-worker of hers had been one of the Zebra victims. She kept her calm all throughout this ordeal and survived through her courage.

Now you know why this AAUW Outreach charity, the Grateful Garment Project, is a personal one for me. There was no such group available for my friend but now there is one, and the only one in California.

The Grateful Garment Project is called by sexual-assault response teams throughout California when clothing is needed. Grateful Garment needs funds to buy new clothing for those teams. Grateful Garment and its victims — women, children and men — need our help.

Here is an easy way to help victims: a recurring donation of “\$1 a Day for Dignity.” Just \$360 can provide four people clothing to wear home from the hospital.

You can order from their accounts with [Walmart](#) and [Amazon](#).

Or you can donate on the Grateful Garment Project [website](#).



What difference could a dollar make? A Dollar A Day for Dignity Campaign

Join us in restoring dignity to victims of sexual violence for just a dollar a day... imagine, for less than the cost of a cup of coffee at your favorite coffee shop you can become a restorer of dignity when you take the Dollar A Day for Dignity challenge.

Be a Change Maker

Partner with The Grateful Garment Project

With your partnership and resources, you will help The Grateful Garment Project go further and help even more victims of sexual violence in our communities.

How Is This Done?

Set up Recurring Donation on your credit card

Set up Bill Pay with your bank

Send a check each month

Scan QR Code to donate now



All donations are tax deductible
The Grateful Garment Project is a
501(c)(3) nonprofit Tax ID# 80-0725390
info@gratefulgarment.org

Spring Digni-Tea to raise funds for Mid-Peninsula's Outreach organization

Mid-Peninsula AAUW's Outreach organization, The Grateful Garment Project, is having a fundraising tea and silent auction, Spring Digni-Tea, from 1-3:30 p.m. April

30 at Nordahl Hall in Los Gatos, featuring Santa Clara County Supervisor Susan Ellenberg. Please click on this [link](#) to purchase a ticket (\$45).

Mid-Peninsula-CA.AAUW.net • AAUW-Mid-Pen@Earthlink.net

Climate Change

Are you truly committed to climate activism?

M.A.D.

Make a Difference

“Act now or swim later.” — S M

Alaskan Pipeline Willow Project

Biden Administration allows “\$8 billion plan to extract 600 million barrels of oil from the largest remaining expanse of wilderness in the United States.” — Lisa Friedman, environmental policy reporter, New York Times

This action dismayed environmentalists and young people who viewed it as a betrayal of his promise of a strong position on climate change.

How did you react to this action?

Let us know!

* * * * *

“This is Our World now”

Climate anxiety among young

Seven Ways to Manage Climate Anxiety, an [article](#) from Teen Vogue.

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Movies and TV shows...

addressing Climate Change directly or indirectly:

Some are oldies. All of them keep us thinking.

- *The Road*
- *First Reformed*
- *Woman at War*
- *Beasts of the Southern Wild*
- *Extrapolations* — TV series coming soon
- *An Inconvenient Truth*
- *Day After Tomorrow*
- *Before the Flood*
- *Chancing Ice*
- *Don't Look Up*
- *A Life on our Planet*
- *Soylent Green*
- *Day The Earth Stood Still*
- *Princess Mononoke*
- *Eating Our Way to Extinction*
- *Grey's Anatomy* new TV episode *Hotter Than Hell*
- *Reservation Dogs*
- *The Octonauts*. Children's TV series. Disney Channel



— Werner Huth

* * * * *

Refresher on your commitment to Climate Change

Do you?

- Save energy at home?
- Walk, bike, take public transportation?
- Eat more vegetables?
- Consider your travel impact?
- Throw away less food?
- Reduce, reuse, repair, recycle?
- Change your home's

source of energy?

- Switch to EV?
- Make money count?
- Speak up?

— From the [United Nations](#)

Do you?

- Speak up?
- Power your home with renewable energy?
- Weatherize?
- Invest in energy efficient appliances?
- Reduce water waste?
- Eat food you buy — and compost what you can't?
- Buy better light bulbs?

- Pull the plugs?
- Drive a fuel-efficient vehicle?
- Maintain your ride/tire pressure?
- Rethink planes, trains and automobiles?

- Reduce, reuse, recycle?

— From Natural Resources Defense Council [“How you can stop global warming”](#)

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Attention, gardeners!

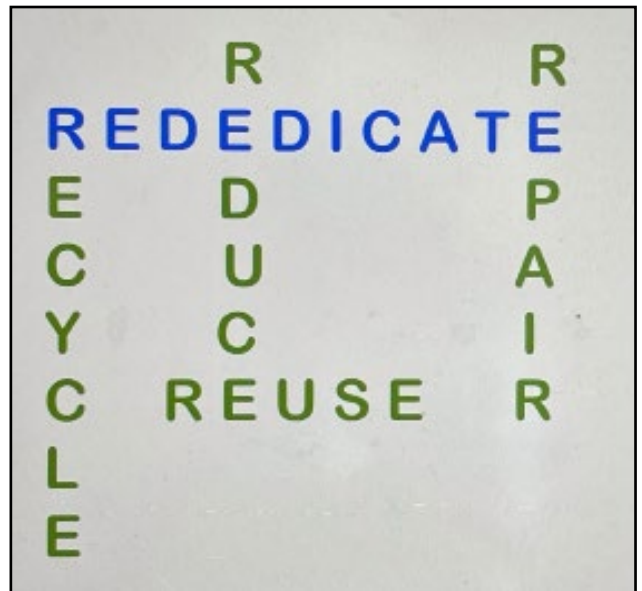
You can help the environment by all these ways:

- Composting kitchen and garden waste.
- Reducing water use.
- Planting trees.
- Removing invasive plants.
- Reducing use of gasoline-powered garden tools.
- Improving energy efficiency with solar-powered garden products.
- Starting a vegetable and herb garden.
- Planting pollinator plants for bees, hummingbirds, butterflies.

* * * * *

Please continue to share your ideas. This is everyone's column. E-mail either of us with your input.

Elvira Monroe and Theoni Pappas



Interest Sections

The Book Bunch will tackle Lessons in Chemistry

Movie Group

The Movie Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the mid- or late afternoon, depending upon the selected film. This is the bargain cost day in local theaters. We attend a movie, usually in Redwood City, occasionally in San Mateo, and then go to a nearby restaurant for dinner. In April, Movie Day is April 18. If you would like to be added to our group list, please either call or email Susanne Burrill.

Tea Time Fiction Group

If you're working or have other commitments during the morning hours and haven't been able to attend other book groups, then join us for a late afternoon fiction book group. We plan to meet between 4 and 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

Since the hours are close to tea time, it was thought that it would be fun to meet at the Hillsdale Nordstrom's third-floor Café where one can purchase tea or coffee and a sweet or even a dinner meal and enjoy yourself while discussing a book.

Kathy Rafael and Mikki Coffino have selected books. Please contact Mikki for more information.

Team Mah-Jongg

A lively group of members play and continue to learn American Mah-Jongg. We meet Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon at the San Carlos Senior Center.

Usually four to six players are able to attend, and we look forward to more joining the group. For further information, contact Kathy Morrow.

Climate Change

Climate Change section meets on the fourth Monday of every month to explore and discuss the varied issues related to Climate Change locally as well as globally. Our next meeting will be April 24 from 3:30-5 p.m. For more information on how you can participate, contact Victoria Kline.

Book Bunch

Spring has sprung! Rejoice! Book Bunch will gather on our third Friday slot April 21 at 10 a.m. to discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. Please let Katherine



New members Carol Orton and Katherine Linnemann share ideas at a Book Bunch gathering on St. Patrick's Day.

Linnemann know if you will be coming. If you need the Zoom option, please let Barb Finnegan know. Wilma will be away in April, so potential new members should contact Barb Finnegan to get onto our email list. Carol Orton will choose a book and host on May 19.

Current Issues

This interesting current events discussion group will meet Tuesday, March 28, at 3 p.m. at Gail Langkusch's home. Please RSVP to Marilyn Zack.

Hilly Hikers

Linda Howard will lead the somewhat steep local hike in April that she aborted because of weather and trail conditions. Contact her for date (very weather dependent) and details. Wilma Hoffmann will be back in May and would like to lead a Russian Ridge Open Space hike on our usual fourth Friday, May 26, assuming trails are open again by then. The contrasting purple of the lupin and the gold of either the poppies or dandelions should be spectacular up there. Meantime any member could set up a hike through our

local parks as they recover from their recent trail damage, where the wildflowers should be out in April.

All About Food

Shop and lunch are planned for Thursday, April 13, at 10:30 a.m. We will meet at Nijiya Market, 1956 S. El Camino Real at 20th Avenue, San Mateo. RSVP to Carole Farina.

French Conversation

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 11, at 1:30 p.m. We're still going to talk about our plans for future meetings, so check with Laverne Rabinowitz for the location and come to take part!

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.



County Sheriff Christina Corpus offers insights into policing

By Gail Langkusch

There was very good attendance at the March 11 Program Meeting at which the guest speaker was the newly elected San Mateo County Sheriff Christina Corpus.

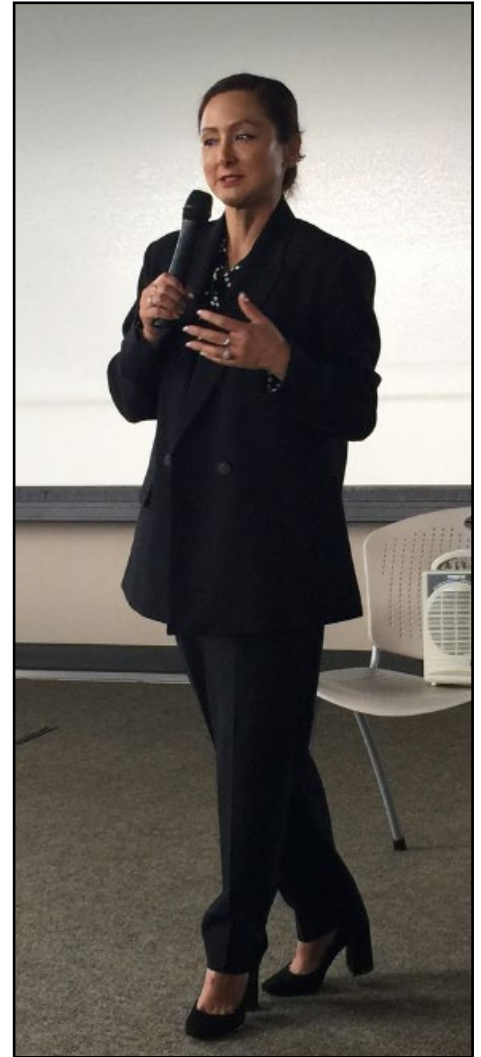
The meeting started with members from the Mid-Peninsula Branch and the San Mateo Branch socializing as they enjoyed some drinks and treats provided by Hospitality chairs Victoria Kline and Nancy Cantisano.

The program started with a short, informative presentation about Healthy Cities Tutoring given by Georgeann Morin, executive director, and Emily McLuhan, program manager. They encouraged members to volunteer to tutor school-age children in

Redwood City and San Carlos. They said there is a great need for volunteer tutors, and they added that data shows that the tutoring program has been very successful in improving students' academic skills.

In her presentation, Corpus provided background on why she entered the field of law enforcement, the difficulties she faced and overcame in her race for San Mateo County Sheriff, and the changes she is initiating in the Sheriff's Department. Her talk was followed by a spirited Q&A session.

Corpus said she is more than happy to help us plan a visit to the San Mateo County Jail, which we may be able to arrange in the not-too-distant future.



SM County Sheriff Christina Corpus



Georgeann Morin of Healthy Cities

Public Policy

Bills to limit social media effects get scrutiny

By Kathi Harper
State Public Policy Chair

The State Public Policy Committee, in conjunction with our Public Policy Advocate Kathy Von Osten, has completed its selection of the 30 bills that the committee and Von Osten will be working on this year.

This year our bills fall into the following categories from the three pillars of our Public Policy Priorities:

- Eight Economic Security bills
- Eleven Public Education bills
- Twenty-one Social Justice bills

Of the Social Justice bills, here are the topics:

- Eight on reproductive justice
- Five on health care
- Five on freedom from violence including sex exploitation, domestic violence and stalking
- One on gender-identity protection

- Two on voting rights

The committee then selected its top three priority bills, including at least one bill which we will co-sponsor (“A” bills). Von Osten will spend most of her time working on these bills, including working with the authors’ offices, attending committing hearings, and writing letters of support.

These are also the three bills members will advocate for in their Lobby Days visits.

The committee then selected three next-level bills (“B” bills), which are important but not as resource-intensive. The remaining 24 bills will be handled as “C” level bills.

Here is a look at our top three bills:

AB1394 – This is a co-sponsored bill. It would allow victims of child sexual exploitation and trafficking to sue a social media platform for between \$1 million and \$5 million if the victim can prove the platform

design knowingly, recklessly or negligently facilitated the use of code words for sexual predators to describe the type of child and the type of sexual activity that resulted in the act of exploitation.

SB287 — It would prohibit a social media platform from using a design, algorithm or feature that the platform knows, or should know, causes child users to purchase fentanyl, inflict harm on themselves or others, develop an eating disorder or engage in dangerous dieting, purposely take their own lives, and/or experience addiction to the social media platform. A victim of any of these consequences can sue the platform for up to \$250,000 for each violation.

AB549 — It requires all state agencies to conduct an evaluation of all their departments to ensure the state does not discriminate against women and report their findings every two years

Cadmium and lead in dark chocolate! What else will we have to give up?

By Wilma Hoffmann

Now we hear that dark chocolate has dangerous levels of cadmium and lead in it! Do we have to give up on dark chocolate? Is it in all dark chocolate or can it be avoided?

Why are lead and cadmium an issue? For pregnant people and young children, heavy metals can cause developmental problems, affect brain development, and lead to lower IQ. In adults lead can lead to nervous system problems, hypertension, immune system suppression, kidney damage, and reproductive issues.

How do they get into the chocolate? Both can leach from the soil into the cocoa beans.

California’s Prop 65 put very stringent Maximum Allowable Dose (MAD) levels in place for lead and cadmium, much stronger than the FDA MADs. As You Sow, a non-profit that advocates enforcing Prop 65, reached a settlement with the National Confectioners Association (NCA), requiring members to put a warning about the cadmium and lead content on their products that exceed MADs, but the author is unclear

to what levels they agreed.

The National Confectioners Association includes recognizable big-name chocolate manufacturers like Ghirardelli and See’s. So what chocolate products have unacceptable levels of these heavy metals? Who knows?

[Consumer Reports](#) (CR) found cadmium and lead in ALL of the 28 dark chocolate bars they tested.

Note that just being organic does not mean heavy-metal safe. CR tested Hu Organic Simple Dark Chocolate 70% as having 210% the lead MAD level. You read correctly, more than twice!

What to do? Since one ounce of chocolate a day with above MAD levels will put me over my limit for that day, I will try to avoid my favorite — Trader Joe’s Dark Chocolate Lovers Chocolate 85% which is one of CR’s five with the worst levels of both.

The hard part will be limiting my intake of cadmium and lead — even if I cut out dark chocolate — since they’re present in other nutritious foods such as carrots, sweet potatoes and spinach, all of which I eat frequently.

Hope House’s Wish List is updated here

By Yvonne Bergero

AAUW Mid-Peninsula Outreach supports Hope House which, for the past 30 years, has been offering comprehensive treatment for those women who are pregnant or with an infant and in need of services for Substance Use Disorder and/or Mental Health support.

This assistance is provided in a residential setting that is sensitive to differing backgrounds, cultures and gender orientation.

Hope house is a part of the family services offered by The Service League of San Mateo County.

Mid-Pen Branch supports Hope House by reaching out to our membership to gather needed items for their clients and residential homes.

The following is a list of new items that they are needed: Women’s socks, underwear, bras, pajamas (all size medium, large or extra-large) as well as journals.

New or gently used items needed include towels, twin sheets, bathroom rugs and silverware.

Please deliver items to Yvonne Bergero.



GOV TREK

AAUW California

It has been exciting and rewarding to launch the new state-led project Gov Trek this year!

All signs point to it being a highly successful program. And we want you to be a part of its finale!

Gov Trek's goal is to address the shortage of women in the halls of power. This five-week online program for more than 50 high school girls introduced them to the world of public service through inspiring speakers and interactive activities. Learn more [here](#).

Gov Trek is wrapping up Saturday,

March 25 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. with opening remarks by Sen. Toni G. Atkins, followed by teams presenting their simulated electoral campaign packages in a contest.

We'd like you to see them in action. You'll be amazed at the talent and enthusiasm of these remarkable young women when you hear their stump speeches and see their campaign ads.

Come and see your future leaders! You'll even have a chance to vote for your choice for the winning team. See if it matches the judges' decision!

[Register here](#)