



Between raindrops, members of Hilly Hikers (including Blue on the leash) pose in front of an acacia tree in full bloom in Redwood Shores.

## Skyline College professor to speak to SM and Mid-Pen branches March 9

By Maureen Buchner

Please join us on March 9 at Redwood Shores Library to meet Prof. Danielle Powell of Skyline College in San Bruno. She will introduce us to the exciting Women's Mentoring and Leadership Academy founded at Skyline.

The talk will begin at 2 p.m. Refreshments and socializing will begin at 1:30 p.m.

The WMLA mission is empowering and transforming women at Skyline College to achieve personal and professional growth. Powell will share with us her insight and experiences gained from attending AAUW National Conference of College Women Student Leaders meeting last May in Washington, D.C., which has been at the University of Maryland every May for a decade.

The San Mateo Branch has partnered with WMLA to send students from the San Mateo County Community College District to this conference.

Powell is a tenured professor in the Communication Studies Department at Skyline. She has taught Communication Studies for 28 years at both four-year universities and community colleges, including James Madison University, Wake Forest University. See **POWELL, Page 2**



**Danielle Powell**

## President's Message

# It's nominations season! When you get a call, please say 'Yes'

By Chris Panero

As you know, an ongoing challenge in any volunteer organization is leadership succession. Our branch and AAUW are no different: each year, a hard-working and not-easily-discouraged nominating committee takes on the task of identifying our leaders for the next year.

AAUW-California state leadership offers support and inspiration at each step, and on Feb. 27, you'll have a chance to hear from Barry Altland, who has developed a novel approach to cultivating volunteers and is the author of an acclaimed book, *Engaging the Head, Heart and Hands of a Volunteer*.

Barry has extensive experience as a volunteer and executive leader in a variety



Chris Panero

of non-profit organizations. He has applied his unique experience to craft guidance for new and sustaining volunteers, helping to maintain energy and enthusiasm.

His seminar promises to be engaging and interactive, and his ideas will help you any time you need to lead or recruit volunteers.

The seminar is on Tuesday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m. Click [here](#) to register. The session will be recorded and available for later viewing on the AAUW-CA [website](#).

As mentioned above, it's nominations season! You know what I'm going to say: If a member of the nominating

committee calls you and asks you to take a branch job, please say yes!

# This webinar offers a close-up into how AAUW was integrated

By Cathy Chowenhill

I recently watched an AAUW CA webinar that I would highly recommend. It is about one woman who worked hard to integrate AAUW. Yes, when AAUW was founded, our organization only admitted white members. It's hard to believe, but it was fascinating to hear the details.

One black woman, Mollie Church Terrill, wanted to join AAUW. She was one of a few women, let alone black women, who got a college degree at the time. She graduated from the predominately white Oberlin College in 1884.

## Greatest Need Fund allows AAUW to pivot quickly

Please consider a gift to the Greatest Need Fund of AAUW.

This fund allows AAUW to respond rapidly, in our communications and advocacy, to critical issues affecting women as they emerge — whether it's a new threat to Title IX, an opportunity to partner with employ-

This webinar is the story of how she worked to try to integrate AAUW. It took a long time (into her 80s, in 1949!), but she was persistent. The story of the machinations that it took is spellbinding. We are always working to improve!

If you'd like to watch it, the recording has been posted on the AAUW California website. You can find it in the article on the [home page](#) under Branch Tools or by clicking this direct [link](#).

It is about 90 minutes long, so find a rainy afternoon and a cup of tea. You will be amazed.

ers, or the dawn of a social justice movement like #MeToo. When donations are not restricted to fellowships or specific projects, we have the dollars we need to pivot as the national dialogue shifts — and get our work covered by major media outlets such as the New York Times, CNN and Fortune.

## Who? What? When?

**President:** Chris Panero

**Membership:** Stephanie Katz 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 Stephanie Katz or Barb Finnegan

**Board Meeting:** Tuesday, March 5, at 10 a.m.; Redwood City Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt, Redwood City.

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

## Powell

Continued from Page One

sity, and at Cascadia College.

She is a native of North Carolina, but she's lived and worked in diverse communities on both coasts of the United States.

She earned a bachelor's degree in Speech Communication from James Madison University, an M.A. in Communication and a Master's of Divinity degree, both from Wake Forest University; and, a post master's certificate in Non-Profit Management from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

She is a PhD candidate in the Higher Education Leadership program at Colorado State University. Danielle was the 2018 recipient of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges' Stanback-Stroud Diversity Award.

According to Powell, WMLA at Skyline has a very lively and diverse group of students whose goals align well with the AAUW mission.

She has also led an international service learning program to Guatemala, and two short-term study abroad programs to South Africa, and one to Costa Rica. She will co-lead a short-term study abroad program to Ghana this upcoming semester.

# A look at the world now that we've lost Roe

By Wilma Hoffmann

The Silicon Valley Branch offered a Zoom meeting to mark the 51st Anniversary of Roe vs Wade on Jan. 21. The speaker was Christine Henneberg, a passionate doctor who spent time in the Central Valley working in the abortion field who is currently with Kaiser Permanente Medical Foundation. She focused her talk on the differences between before Roe and now.

Before Roe, there was a sizable group of women who remember backyard abortions, coat hangers and equally barbarous activities, and the shame and guilt surrounding it. The current generation of women of child-bearing-age do not have those vivid memories, even the oldest of them. They were born post-Roe. Most abortions, since 1969 in California when they became legal, are medical abortions either from a doctor

or with the use of an abortifacient drug purchased in person or online. So, what is the problem? Anyone, anywhere, now could get one, right?

About 1997, 16 women who each led a different organization of color, met in Atlanta and started the reproductive justice movement here in the U.S. They urge us to note that it is a reproductive justice issue, not a reproductive rights issue. They wanted the freedom to have children, the freedom to not have children, and the freedom to bring children up in health and safety. That became the national movement, Sistersong.

So why is the Reproductive Justice movement still around? Since the Supreme Court tossed the issue back to individual states last year, women who live in a state where abortion is illegal are stuck where they were pre-Roe, with only those with the

means to travel out of state able to get the care they need.

But what about self-managed abortions? In some states even that is illegal, and there is the problem of lack of support if something goes wrong. Prenatal care? Breast-feeding support? Draconian laws even penalize doctors.

But not in California, you say? Here it is more about socio-economics. Imagine being an hourly employee or a farm worker. Where would you find the time and money to get care for the other children while you travel to the nearest free center? Even some of California's hospitals will not do abortions and that brings us to the point of lack of training for doctors when they are interning in such a place.

Henneberg's stories of the women she treated were heart-rending, making you want

to join in the fight. Some sort of political action is great, as is donating to [Access Reproductive Justice](#), a California organization. Donations to the foundation are tax-deductible.

Henneberg has written a memoir, *Boundless*, about her life, and the path she followed to become so passionate an advocate.



## Vote on 2024 AAUW bylaws change by May 15

By Nancy Oliver

Attention, members. Please take time to look at the following important proposal from National.

### Proposal Open Membership:

This is another attempt to remove any degree requirement for membership.

On Jan. 8, all members should have received an email from Shannon Wolfe, AAUW Managing Director and Chief of Staff.

“As a member of AAUW, your voice and your vote count. This spring AAUW members will be asked to vote on amendments to the national bylaws recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee to open membership.

To find more information about this issue and read the proposed changes, go [here](#).

You should see the window, Governance & Tools, which will allow you to view the

2024 Proposed Bylaws Changes, the Open Membership Toolkit, and the AAUW Election: FAQ.

Key Dates for 2024 Vote:

- April 3 | Voting opens (online voting is encouraged)
- May 15 | Online voting ends at 9 p.m. PDT and results announced online



## Elaine Salinger urges action on taxing carbon

Mid-Pen's guest speaker for the general meeting on Feb. 10 at the Veterans Memorial Senior Center in Redwood City, was Elaine Salinger, co-leader of the San Mateo County chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby.

According to Salinger, one of the most effective tools to fight climate change, beyond individual efforts, would be a price on carbon. This would influence companies to cut their carbon emissions because it would cost them money in the form of a fee, which

is then returned to individuals as a carbon cash-back dividend.

She encouraged the group to contact their congressional representatives to urge them to support a carbon fee.

If you would like to read more about this, here is the website for [Citizens' Climate Lobby](https://citizensclimate.org/).

About 40 members and guests attended, and they all came away with something they can do to fight climate change. Some

of her suggestions were changing our diet, installing a heat pump, keeping food and yard waste out of landfills and many more.

Salinger's message is that there is hope around the issue of Climate Change, and intentional and meaningful action does help.





## Interest Sections

# Book Bunch to read *Homegoing* by Yao Gyassi

### 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. Call or email Susanne Burrill.

### Tea Time Fiction Group

Tea Time Fiction Book Discussion Group will continue to meet on the third Thursday of the month from 4-6 p.m. in the Hillsdale Nordstrom restaurant on Nordstrom's third floor. Kathy Rafael and Mikki Coffino are co-leaders so newly interested members can contact either one.

### French Conversation

We are continuing to read our story about *L'Homme qui plantait des arbres*, starting from the line "A partir de 1920...." The meeting will be hosted by Leslie Pasahow on Tuesday, March 12, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Mark

your calendars and come for our discussions!

### Team Mah-Jongg

A lively group of members plays and continues to learn American Mah-Jongg. We meet Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon at the San Carlos Adult Community Center at 601 Chestnut, San Carlos. Usually, four to six players are able to attend, and we look forward to more joining the group. Periodically, classes are offered for those who are new to the game. For further information, contact Kathy Morrow.

### Climate Change

The Climate Change section meets once a month on the fourth Monday from 3:30 -5 p.m. Contact Victoria Kline for meeting details and to RSVP.

### Book Bunch

The Book Bunch meets on the third Friday of each month at 10 a.m. The next two books to be discussed are *Homegoing* by Yao Gyassi (hosted by Gail Langkusch on Friday, March 15) and *The House of Lincoln*

by Nancy Horan (hosted by Wilma Hoffman on Friday, April 19). If you have questions, please contact Carol Orton

### Hilly Hikers

If you are interested in hilly hikes, make sure Wilma Hoffmann has your contact info. Days and dates will vary depending on weather and the travel plans of members.

### All About Food

Join us as we explore the history, uses and benefits of foods and how to grow or prepare them. Take a turn leading monthly discussions or suggest a tasting or excursion. Meetings are at 3:30 p.m. on the second Thursday. Contact Carole Farina.

### 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.

## Nominations for a Named Gift

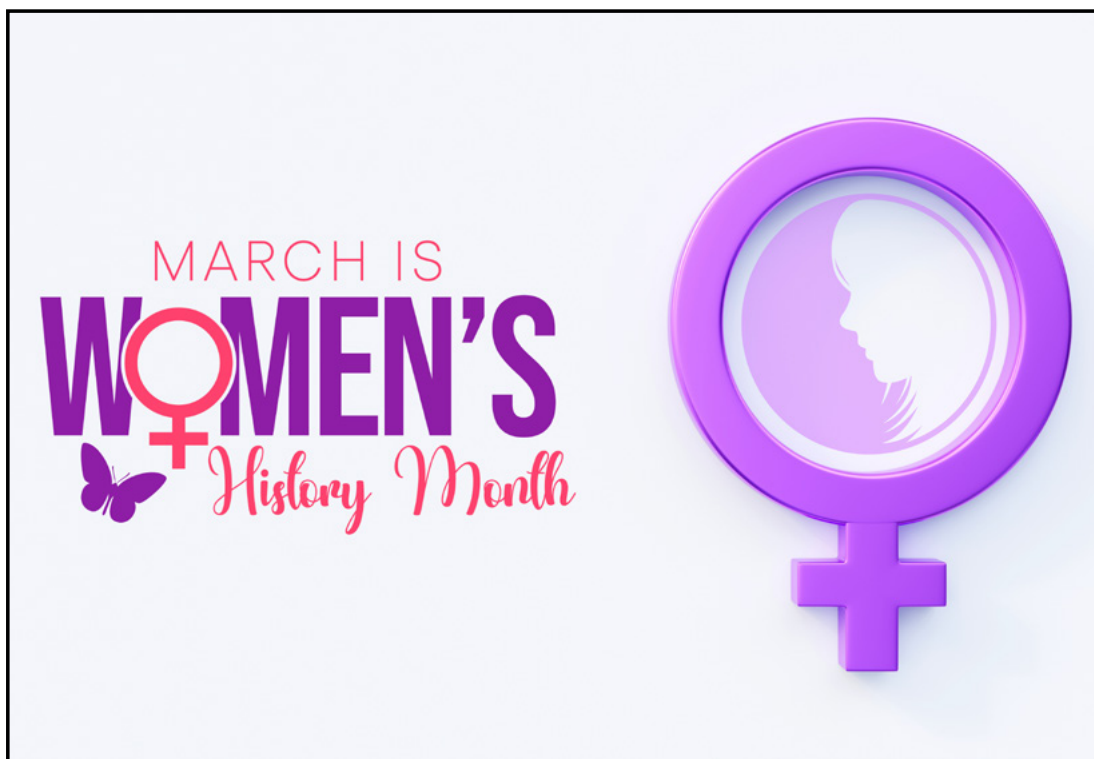
### Honoree open

Please nominate a branch member who has given exemplary service to our branch or AAUW to be our Named Gift Honoree.

Here's a list of Honorees from the last eight years.

recent past honorees:

- 2016:** Kathy Rafael
- 2017:** Cathy Chowenhill, June Hennig
- 2018:** Sandra Neff, Karen Rende
- 2019:** Carolyn Miller
- 2020:** Wilma Hoffman, Chris Panero
- 2021:** Carole Farina, Pat Ivester
- 2022:** Margot Diltz, Sally Mellinger
- 2023:** Michelle Carter, Beth Swanson



## Climate Change

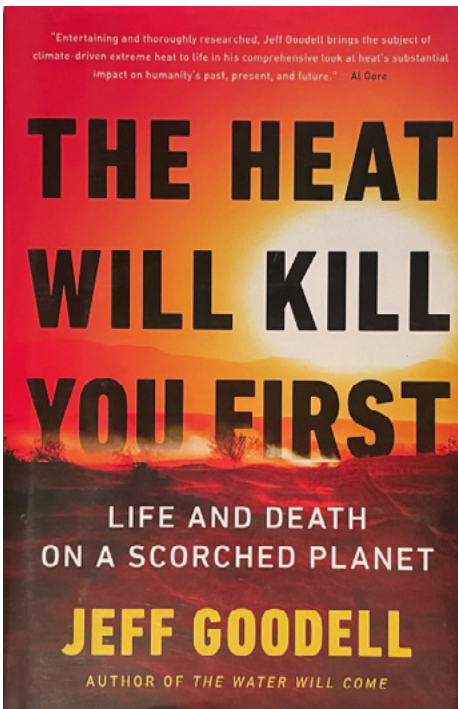
# Are you doing all you can for Climate Change?

### M.A.D.

### Make a difference

*The great danger we face is not technological hubris, but apathy.* —Jeff Goodell

### A must read!



Notice how spring flowers are appearing earlier, and fall appears a few weeks later? These changes impact our food supply and disease outbreaks. Goodell's narratives bring climate change to life — front and center — and confront us so we can't turn away.

Elizabeth Kolbert, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sixth Extinction*, says, "As the planet warms, all our assumptions are going to be up-ended... *The Heat Will Kill You First* is essential reading."

\* \* \* \* \*

### Act now for climate change?

Are you:

- Taking shorter showers?
- Carpooling?
- Exploring or trying meat-free meals?
- Shopping for local produce?
- Recycling?
- Turning off lights when not in use?
- Turning off vampire devices which are

electrical appliances that drain power when left on standby or when they aren't in use

- Refilling/reusing containers?
- Bringing your own bags?
- Monitoring use and waste?
- Engaging in political actions?
- Supporting organizations and elected

officials committed to climate change? Changes of habits and choices can make a difference on climate change. How are you doing?

Our daily actions can reduce our carbon footprint. Collective action has the largest impact.

\* \* \* \* \*



### What is your favorite chip?

It's not just the chips you should think about. Look at the chip bag. Do you see the recycling symbol?

Most chip bags cannot be recycled, nor are they biodegradable. These bags usually contain aluminum and/or polyethylene,

making it especially difficult to recycle because of many different kinds of plastic in their makeup. It is almost impossible to separate its components and recycle them.

Even if these bags degrade in 100 years, they contaminate the soil with their microplastics for decades more.

As environmentalists, are we willing to give up or cut back on packaged chips until manufacturers find alternative packaging?

\* \* \* \* \*

### ACTION ALERT

**BREAK FREE FROM PLASTIC POLLUTION ACT, S3127**  
Contact your legislators to support this bill!

It is now in the committee on Environmental and Public Works.  
Chairman: Senator Bernie Sanders(VT).  
Contact this committee as well as your legislators.



### Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act S3127

Submitted by Sen. Jeff Merkley (Ore.), Rep. Jared Huffman (Calif.) and Sen. Ed Markey (Mass.)

This act is regarded as the most comprehensive approach to reducing plastic pollution in our nation's history.

Check the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act on this [website](#) for details and an explanation.

Please continue to share your ideas.

This is everyone's column. E-mail either of us with your input and suggestions.

**Elvira Monroe and Theoni Pappas**

## Public Policy

# What are school boards supposed to be doing?

By Seena Trigas, Member  
AAUW California Public  
Policy Committee School  
Board Project

AAUW California is concerned about the censorship of classroom material, the heightened enforcement of board policies rejecting diversity, and providing policies against gay and minority students.

This concern now leads me, as a former school board member, high school teacher/department chair and adjunct college professor, to reflect on the role of school boards in California and their limitations.

The State Board of Education (SBE) is the controlling structure for K-12, and is the governing and policy-making body of the state for public education. Among its duties is the adoption of statewide academic standards for content and of curriculum frameworks. These inform

and guide the local school boards in the development and implementation of specific curricula for K-12 students, and serve as the basis for the adoption of instructional materials.

School board members represent districts within the school district boundaries. As the only locally elected officials representing the interests of school children, board members are advocates for students, the district's educational programs and public education.

The California Education Code requires that governing boards of school districts adopt instructional materials in accordance with the state framework adopted by the State Board of Education and district boards shall provide substantial teacher involvement in the selection of instructional materials.

In 2016, the New State Framework in History and Social Sciences was issued and



2023-2025  
PUBLIC  
POLICY  
PRIORITIES

- Economic Security for All Women
- Equal Access to Quality Public Education for All Students
- Social and Racial Justice for All Members of Society
- Increased Representation of Women in Leadership Roles

supported the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful (FAIR) Act. Part of the requirements indicate that all K-12 students shall receive instruction that “strongly emphasizes student inquiry” and “reflects on the contributions of many diverse groups.”

In 2019 the California School Boards Association (CSBA) Governance Brief stated that “effective school boards are equity-driven, making intentional governance decisions that combat institutional discrimination and bias (both explicit and implicit) and eliminating disparities in educational outcomes based on socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or family background.”

In 2023, AB1078 was passed, which requires the California State Department of Education to assess if school boards are in compliance with state laws requiring public

schools to provide diverse education.

It requires local school districts with insufficient instructional materials to correct this and authorizes the department to purchase (at district expense) adequate curricula if the district restricts students from learning about important topics like racism, sexism, and gender-based marginalization.

AAUW branch members play a critical role in ensuring all California school boards are governed by board members who will follow AB 1078, and who oppose policies that infringe on the civil rights of LGBTQ+ students.

All our members are encouraged to become vigilant observers of their local districts, and to contact your assigned liaison if members are not meeting their obligations under the guidelines outlined above. You can find the reporting form [here](#). The contact liaison for our branch is Ashley Dargert at [ashley.l.dargert@gmail.com](mailto:ashley.l.dargert@gmail.com).