



Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek (CA)



# The Advocate, March 2021

Online at <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/newsletter/>

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## From the President

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Vaccines are finally finding their way to us! Many of you have reported having received at least one shot and we are looking forward to gradually expanding our in-person contacts starting with our families. I know these vaccines are just in the nick of time for me as my grandson prepares to go to pre-school and I am sure many of us have similar reasons to be happy about being vaccinated. I hope we can all breathe a sigh of relief soon.

Meanwhile, our DAW branch is in full action. If you missed the Women in STEM program in February, you can [click here](#) to watch the recorded session. The two speakers, Chitra Manohar and Nitya Furtado, will become the two newest members of our branch, so please welcome them by hearing their stories.

The deadline is March 3 to vote in the AAUW 2021 Art Contest. Many of our members have contributed their talents to this effort so please enjoy the beautiful art and vote for your favorites!

Also coming up quickly on March 8 at 5:00 pm is our next branch program celebrating International Women's Day. This is a joint program with the Benicia-Vallejo AAUW branch. We start with opening remarks by our Lieutenant Governor, Eleni Kounalakis, and feature four of our members who will share some of their extraordinary contributions to making the world a more equitable place for women. We have amazing women in our two AAUW branches, and this is a great way to learn more about their inspiring stories.

Speaking of inspiration, the branch Nominating Committee is looking for candidates; here's your chance to participate and help us support women's equity and education in our community! Please contact Joanne Quijano to learn more.

### March 2021 To Do List

- By Mar 3, deadline for [AAUW Art Contest](#) vote
- Attend Mar 8 [International Women's Day](#) branch program and celebration
- Encourage applications for our [2021 Local Scholarships](#) due March 12
- Catch up with friends at the [Wine, Chat and Board Update](#) Mar 18
- Contact Joanne Quijano to [volunteer for a branch elected or appointed board position](#)
- Contact Deborah Wechsler to volunteer to help with [Tech Trek virtual summer camp](#)
- April 21 - Save the date for Local Women in Encore Careers branch program
- Buy your raffle tickets now for our Local Scholarships [Quilt Drawing](#)

On the fundraising front, we are looking forward to delivering our Mangia Mi dinners on March 3 with \$19 plus any tips supporting our Tech Trek program. Our thanks to Susan Terzuoli and Robin Halloran for leading this effort and to the volunteers who will deliver the meals. I hope you are enjoying these smaller social-distance-friendly fundraising programs that enable us to maintain our project funding. Your feedback is always welcome to me or Susan Terzuoli.

Finally, as you know, we have an upcoming vote from April 7 to May 17 on the proposal from our National AAUW to eliminate the degree requirement for membership. There is extensive information about the pros and cons of this issue on the AAW Open Membership page, as well as an article on the topic in this Advocate. Please be sure to make your voice heard on this issue.

I hope you are all doing well in this last month of winter preparing to welcome Spring and are able to expand our social worlds a bit!

*by Chris Ritter, President*

## **From the Editor**

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We welcome your contributions to the Advocate. Send any articles and pictures to Claudia Schwarz, "Standing Editor," by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the next month's Advocate. Submissions should be in the following format:

- Articles in a .doc or .docx file, or in the body of an email
- Pictures in .jpg format (compressed)

Contact information for people mentioned in the Advocate is in your directory. If you do not have a directory, contact Marsha Anderson Landau.

## **From the Corresponding Secretary**

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Pat Gross, our Corresponding Secretary, sends out cards on behalf of our Branch. Let Pat know if you know about any AAUW-DAW member who might appreciate a "Get Well" card, a condolence card after the death of a loved one, or a congratulations card.

## **From the Treasurer: Where to Send Expenses and Deposits**

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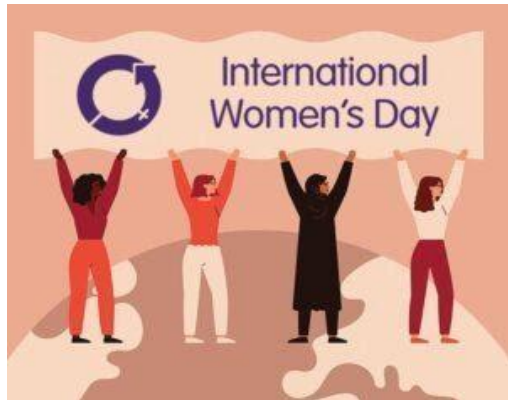
If you have expense vouchers or deposits, send them to our AAUW P.O. Box 966 in Alamo, 94507 instead of to our Treasurer's home. We can process your transaction more quickly if your paperwork goes to the P.O. box in case the Treasurer is unavailable.

## **Upcoming Events**

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**International Women's Day Celebration, March 8, 5:00 to 6:30**

*by Bette Felton, Programs VP*



***International Women's Day - Celebrate  
Women Shaping a More Equitable Future  
5:00 p.m., Monday, March 8, 2021***

The Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek and Benicia-Vallejo and branches are joining to celebrate International Women's Day. The program honors the tremendous efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping a more equal future.

The celebration features opening remarks by Eleni Kounalakis, California's Lt. Governor. She is the first woman elected to this office has served in this position since 2019.

The program will feature four AAUW member speakers:

- **Elizabeth Patterson**, MURP, former Benicia mayor, will describe her journey for a sustainable world from a young girl to a career in land use planning and management and elected office.
- **Claudia Martinez-Schwarz**, MPH, a food policy expert who is administering a federal grant to educate rural high schoolers in Armenia and leading a USAID grant submission for STEM students in Colombia. Born in Colombia, Martinez-Schwarz earned her master's degree in public health at UC Berkeley worked for the California Food Policy Advocates.
- **Asha Bajaj**, PT/DPT, managed her own practice in physical therapy for 20 years, in which she focused on women's health. She served as assistant professor of physical therapy at UCSF. She established PT programs in Bhutan, India, Vietnam, and Malawi with Health Volunteers Overseas.
- **Teresa Cheung- Licensed Professional Chemical Engineer, MBA** was the Chair of the Northern CA section of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) and first women winner of its most prestigious Professional Progress Award. She took on AIChE's "Old Boys' Network" in the late 1990's and helped bring equality, visibility and recognition advances for women in chemical engineering.

Members may attend using the link on the Zoom Meeting Links page <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/zoom-meeting-links/> Invite your friends to register here: <https://aauw-womensdaycelebration.eventbrite.com>

**Wine, Chat and Board Update, March 18, 5:00 to 6:00**

*by Chris Ritter, President*

Come join the board and your AAUW friends on Thursday March 18, from 5:00 to 6:00, via Zoom. It's a chance to have a relaxed visit with friends—especially needed these days—and find out what

our branch is working on. You can get the Zoom meeting link for this event here: <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/zoom-meeting-links/>

## National and California AAUW Reports

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### National AAUW Art Contest - Vote by March 3



Over 400 members submitted entries for the 2021 AAUW Art Contest, including three of our own branch members: Kathy Gage, Caroline Sanchez, and Ariana Schwarz. Their entries are shown below, and you can click on them to see a larger version.

Through March 3, you can vote for your ten favorite entries. The six winning entries will be featured on a collection of AAUW note cards mailed to members this spring.

Here are the entries from our own DAW members for you to enjoy.



Dreaming Santorini - Caroline Sanchez 2021



Maui Beach - Caroline Sanchez 2021



Heroine - Ariana Schwarz



Pt. Cabrillo Lighthouse, Caspar, Mendocino Coast September 2020 - Kathy Gage



Blue Heron at Annable Lake, San Ramon Springs 2020 - Kathy Gage



Saturnia Moth, Mendocino Coast September 2020 - Kathy Gage

### AAUW National ACT NOW! Priorities

As the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress takes on the many challenges facing the nation at this historic time, we must ensure that the fight for equitable and safe workplaces is among the top priorities. Your elected officials need to hear from you today about several legislative items in progress. They are:

**Paycheck Fairness Act:** AAUW has worked for decades to pass this landmark legislation to advance pay equity. The House of Representatives passed the legislation with bipartisan support during the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, but it stalled in the Senate. The bill has already been reintroduced in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress with broad support, but quick action is needed to get this critical bill to President Biden's desk so he can sign it into law. Take action with the AAUW Paycheck Fairness Act advocacy tool kit today.

**Raise the Wage Act:** Raising wages has never been more urgent than during the pandemic. Frontline workers—who are disproportionately women of color—are among the most underpaid workers in the country. The continued stagnation of the minimum wage, combined with the COVID-19 crisis, has reinforced, and widened racial and gender wage gaps. Ensuring all workers receive a fair wage is a matter of gender and racial justice. Act now to demand Congress raise the minimum wage.

**FAMILY Act:** Congress took an important step toward emergency paid family leave in the first COVID-19 relief package last year—but those provisions have expired. Without paid leave, caregivers leave the workforce, families struggle to make ends meet, businesses lose valued employees and our economy suffers. In a public health crisis, paid leave saves lives and livelihoods. Engage today to make sure that paid leave never expires.

### **Proposal about Eliminating AAUW Degree Requirements**

AAUW's annual election will start on April 7. Included in the vote is a proposal to open up membership to those without degrees, which requires a change to AAUW's national bylaws through member vote. The following is information provided by AAUW National about the effects of the proposal. A full description of the proposed bylaws changes can be found [here](#).

#### ***How Might This Bylaw Change Affect My Branch?***

*It will help protect the future of AAUW* by opening opportunities for funding. Because our current educational degree requirement can be deemed discriminatory and not in keeping with our mission, some foundations and corporations will not donate to our organization since it is counter to their criteria of equity. This disadvantage, along with the now 400-plus organizations competing with AAUW on women's equity issues for funding, greatly affects National's ability to get much needed funding. Declining membership, now at 50,000, only provides 15-20% of the annual budget. This is not enough to support branch and member services.

*It will make it easier for your branch to recruit a more diverse membership*, including those who did not have the opportunity to attend college 30, 40 or 50 years ago. In addition to possibly increasing membership, these new members may bring new energy and viewpoints critical to your branch's ability to meet the needs of your community through our mission. It will also remove the embarrassing situations when you must tell someone they do not qualify, such as a government official, a non-profit leader or even a Tech Trek parent. Remember, Eleanor Roosevelt and Lily Ledbetter would not qualify for AAUW membership with our current educational requirement.

*It will update the relevance and image of your branch* as the world reckons with inequality and systemic racism, much of which disproportionately affects women. It might open up more opportunities for collaboration. Having a limiting membership requirement can be considered discriminatory and off putting to other local like-minded groups. When speaking at community functions, it demeans the branch to say that not everyone can be a member.



*It will no longer limit your membership* by penalizing women who cannot attain a degree due to today's skyrocketing educational costs, childcare, elder care, transportation, working multiple jobs and language barriers. Today, there are more alternatives to college degrees which have burdened women with two-thirds of the national college debt. With more careers open to women, i.e., firefighters, pilots, entrepreneurs, artists, politicians, manufacturers, retail managers, and more, your branch may have the potential for a variety of new members.

### ***What Won't Change if this Passes?***

It will not affect AAUW's status as one of the leaders in graduate grants and fellowships. Due to the generosity of our members, our fellowships and grants are fully endowed and will continue in perpetuity.

It will not affect the name – AAUW. Like the YWCA and NAACP, much of the original meanings are no longer accurate. For example, we are international, not just American. We have been open to individuals with associate degrees, not just degrees from universities, since 2005 and open to men since 1987.

It will not affect the honor of having earned a degree in times when, so few women attained this achievement. Today, with women outpacing men in earning all degrees for decades, we can proud that we were instrumental in breaking down the barriers for women who followed us.

It will not affect the uniqueness of AAUW. Its uniqueness is its breadth of programming, research, policy, advocacy, fellowships and grants, and grassroots membership.

It will not change your branch's involvement in local scholarships or interest groups.

It will not change the mission of the branch. Our mission is not determined by a degree, but in belief in and dedication to equality for women.

It will not attract many younger members which numerous national studies show Millennial and Generation Z women and men prefer projects and not membership programs.

### **AAUW California Board of Directors Open Positions**

There are three open positions on the 2021 California Board of Directors. Would you like to become a candidate? Or do you know someone else who might consider it? The open positions on the 2021 AAUW California Board of Directors are:

- President-Elect (one-year term 2021-2022) during the second year of the president's term, followed by a two-year term (2022-2024) as president.
- Chief Financial Officer (two-year term 2021-2023)
- Director (two-year term 2021-2023)

Details about these nominations and the election, including dates, are at <https://www.aauw-ca.org/elections-nominations/>. The deadline for nomination submittal is March 15, 2021. If you need more information, contact Deanna Arthur, Charlene Goehring, or Janice Lee at [nominating@aauw-ca.org](mailto:nominating@aauw-ca.org).

### **AAUW California Public Policy Team Virtual Lobby Day, March 24**

On March 24, 2021, AAUW California, in conjunction with its new advocacy firm, MVM Strategy Group, will be conducting a virtual Lobby Day in Sacramento with California legislators. Members who have registered to participate will be receiving their assignments, training and talking points soon. Thank you AAUW CA for organizing this advocacy event to advance our public policy agenda.

## **DAW Branch Reports**

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### **Nominating Committee Seeking Candidates for 2021-22 Elected Board Positions**

*by Joanne Quijano, Branch Nominating Committee*

Want to get more involved with our local Branch leadership? The election for positions on our DAW Branch Executive Board is coming up! The Nominating Committee is looking for candidates; here is your chance to participate and help us support women's equity and education in our community. While we do have a few candidates already, we need more people to fill all the elected positions. Even if you've never held an office, don't worry, there are lots of experienced current and past Board members to help out any new volunteers. And if you have held an office, we welcome your experience! The elections are held in May, with the new Board members taking office for the year starting in July.

The Branch elected Board positions are:

- President
- President Elect
- Programs VP
- Membership VP
- Funds VP
- Secretary
- Treasurer

This is the link to the Policies & Procedures on our Branch website to see details about the duties of each position: [AAUW Governance Documents | Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek \(CA\)](#)

If you are interested, would like more information, or know of a branch member who might be interested, please contact anyone on the Nominating Committee. We are Marsha Anderson Landau, Kathie Hixon, Alicia Jones, Joanne Quijano, and Chris Winter. We look forward to hearing from you!

## Tech Trek Update -- STEM 2021 Virtual Camp, Plans Are Underway!

*by Deborah Wechsler, Tech Trek Chair 2020-21*

Plans are moving ahead for three to four 2021 Virtual Camps scheduled between mid-June and early August.

- We requested and were approved for 18 campership positions for the 2021 camp. Each campership is \$400, and we do have funding for these 18 girls. But we will need funding for the 2022 in-person camp. Thankfully Robin Halloran stepped up to arrange the Mangia Mi fundraiser, aided by Liz Williams and Susan Terzuoli.
- The 2021 camp is open to girls who were selected for the cancelled 2020 camp. We invited our ten girls and six are excited to attend the 2021 virtual camp.
- We have received two nominees of 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls from each of the six public schools in our branch area. We have a team getting ready to interview the girls nominated.
- We invited our campers from 2015-2018 to apply for the coach positions. Ten of our former campers expressed interest and at least 3 have applied.

You can still get involved. Please let me know if you are interested in helping with any of the following:

1. Participate in the interview and selection process, to be done virtually, probably beginning in February 2021. Details of how this will happen are being worked out at the CA State level, but it will all be done virtually this year.
2. Help distribute robotics kits to selected girls.
3. Participate as a Build Coach, Social Coach, or Workshop Coach for one or more camps. You will receive training (4-8 hours) and a monetary stipend. Here are the [descriptions of the coach positions](#), and you can access the [application form here](#).

More details about these opportunities and the virtual camp are available on our website <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/programs/techtrek/>. Please contact me with any questions. Not your thing? I encourage you to forward this information to your relatives or friends who might be interested in volunteering to support girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math). Thanks in advance for your patience and support of Tech Trek as we continue to navigate this new world.

## DAW Interest Group Happenings

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Our branch has a wide variety of Interest Groups. Joining an Interest Group gives you the opportunity to get to know women in the branch who enjoy the same activities as you do. Some Interest Groups are also open to your significant others. Unfortunately, not all the Interest Groups are meeting due to the pandemic. Be sure to check the newsletter each month for updates about whether specific Interest Groups are meeting.

The full list of active and inactive Interest Groups is on our branch website at <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/about/contact/section/>. There you can find details about what each group does, who leads it, and when the group meets. Some Interest Groups are quite popular and have a waiting list. Be sure to add your name to a waiting list if you can't join the group now.

***Interest Groups Currently Meeting***

As of March 1, 2021, the following Interest Groups are meeting:

Interest group	Leader to contact
<a href="#">Bridge: Evening</a>	Arlene Barnett
<a href="#">Great Decisions</a> Meeting only on Tuesdays	Tuesday group: Rebecca Bhatt
<a href="#">Literature: Daytime</a>	Laurie Ehrlich
<a href="#">Literature: Evening</a>	Linda Jimerson
<a href="#">Literature: Novel Ideas</a>  **This Interest Group is full.	Kathy Harkins
<a href="#">Mah Jongg 2</a> The Tuesday group is meeting; the Monday group is not	Paula Weintrab
<a href="#">Movies: First Friday Films</a>  ** This Interest Group is full. Other movie groups are not meeting.	Kathy Harkins

We are looking forward to the end of the pandemic when all Interest Groups can resume full operation.

**Membership Corner**

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*by Marsha Anderson Landau, Membership VP*

If you know anyone who may be interested in becoming a member or advertiser, contact Marsha Anderson Landau, email: [marsha888@comcast.net](mailto:marsha888@comcast.net), or call (925) 351-8188. I am available to answer any questions and send information to them!

## Public Policy Corner

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*by Asha Bajaj, Public Policy Chair*

### **The Golden State Stimulus**

Gov. Gavin Newsom and legislative leaders have agreed to provide low-income Californians a \$600 state stimulus payment to help them weather financial hardships during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is part of a \$9.6-billion economic recovery package that also includes \$2.1 billion in grants for small businesses. The “Golden State stimulus” payments provided under the state proposal, are in addition to the \$600-per-person stimulus checks already approved by Congress and would be on top of direct payments of up to \$1,400 per person that have been proposed by House Democrats.

The package put forward for immediate action also provides more than \$400 million in new federal funds for stipends of \$525 per enrolled child for all state-subsidized child-care and preschool providers, which serve some 400,000 children in subsidized care statewide.

### **The CRISES Act** (The anti-police terrorism project in California)

In the California State Assembly, Sydney Kamlager crafted the CRISES Act in partnership with Cat Brooks, co-founder of the Oakland-based Anti-Police-Terror Project. The bill would establish a grant program for community groups to create emergency response teams that would respond to a wide range of calls instead of the police. These calls might involve intimate partner violence or a mental health crisis. They might come from someone leery of calling the police because of their immigration status, or terrified that they’ll be the one sent to jail. They might come from any Black or Latinx person who fears that when the police are called, someone may end up dead. “All of those groups still have the right to be able to call someone and ask for help when there’s an emergency, without the assumption that they’re criminals, and without the threat of an arrest,” Kamlager said.

### **Reflections on Black Women’s History**

As February Black History Month closes, it is a good time to reflect on the AAUW Fellows and grantees who make Black history all the time. From 1978-79 American Fellow Barbara Smith, a founder of the Black feminist Combahee River Collective, to 2016-17 American Fellow Keisha Blain, who edited a new book with Ibram X. Kendi chronicling 400 years of Black history, these remarkable women span decades and fields. Sometimes they even interview each other!

AAUW alumnae are true trailblazers: There is the first African woman to lead the World Trade Organization (1977-78 International Fellow Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala), the first African American female chemical oceanographer (2000-01 American Fellow Dr. Ashanti Johnson), and the first woman of color elected district attorney in Massachusetts (1996-97 Selected Professions Fellow Rachael Rollins)

## Actions You Can Take for Equity

- As we approach Equal Pay Day (March 24), women and people of color continue to hurt most from the pandemic and resulting economic crisis.
- You can help by urging Congress to raise the federal minimum wage and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA) and the FAMILY Act.

Important March Dates for Public Policy	
March 4	AAUW Webinar with Dr. Shanna Benjamin—Half in Shadow: The Life and Legacy of Nellie Y. McKay
March 9	Asian American and Pacific Islander Equal Pay Day
March 14-26	NGO UN Commission on the Status of Women 65, including AAUW-sponsored session titled, “Policy, Practice & Promise: Advancing Women's Global Economic Power”
March 24	Equal Pay Day (for all women compared to all men)

Stay informed, stay engaged, stay involved!

## Women’s Equality: What Was it Like for You, Mom?

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*by Beth Clark, Advocate Editor*

The articles that were written about Ruth Bader Ginsburg after she died brought back memories of some of my experiences related to women’s rights and discrimination against women. I talked with my daughter about how much RBG had achieved for women, and I also told her about some of my experiences. She was very surprised, having not known much about RBG and having not experienced the same roadblocks herself. It occurred to me that because AAUW works on improving rights for women, it would be good to have a column that would help young women learn about where we've come from. After all, it's hard to gauge how well you're doing if you don't know where you came from.

### ***Do you want to tell us about your experiences?***

If you want to share your experiences with each other and with the young women in our lives, please send them to me ([bclark143@comcast.net](mailto:bclark143@comcast.net)) and I can make this a multi-month article. For example, what kind of messaging did you get about what you could and couldn't do as a woman? What roadblocks did you encounter because you were a woman? Were there any successes you had because you were a woman, things that were not available to men? Include the approximate year and where you were living at the time. You can send just one line or a short story about your experiences. If you don't want your name mentioned, please let me know. Feel free to share experiences of friends also.

Disclaimer: Our group is composed of college-educated women in the suburbs. So, our experiences are not necessarily representative of the experiences of a lot of women in America or in the world. But sharing our experiences here can be a starting place.

### **What It Was Like for Caroline Sanchez**

*This month, Caroline Sanchez shares her experiences in times when expectations for women were different than today. Thank you, Caroline, for sharing your story.*

#### ***How it was for us with education...***

My parents wanted their three daughters to go to college. I always wanted to be a teacher. I lived on a farm in Colorado, in a county with a small population. I attended a one room school with ten students. To attend high school, we walked to the highway and took a 35 mile bus trip. I had some disadvantages because of starting high school at the young age of 12 and graduating at age 16. I also was unable to attend extracurricular activities because of living so far away. Of the students that rode the bus no one else went to college. Of the 55 seniors that graduated in 1952, maybe five went to college. When the principal heard that I was planning to attend Adams State College, he helped me apply for a scholarship which I received.

The college campus had 100 students in each class. It was a nice size, so I was able to get to know all the students and attend activities. While I was going to college my mother's farmer friend commented, "Why is she going to college, just to wash diapers?" I was very insulted, and I told my mother to tell her, "Maybe I can learn a better way to wash them." When I was getting married at the end of my junior year, my parents only consented if my future husband promised that I would graduate from college.

Moving to California, my husband rented a very expensive Berkeley apartment. It was walking distance from the University of California so I could attend classes in September. He also paid out of state tuition, but he kept his promise. It was difficult adjusting to a campus of 30,000 students. I couldn't continue the spring semester because I was expecting a baby near finals. The following September I returned, making arrangements for a babysitter. Thanks to my husband keeping his promise, I was able to graduate.

#### ***How it was for us financially...***

Moving to Pleasant Hill, I became a stay-at-home mom raising our five daughters. Since I did not work out of the home, I used some of the talents I had learned on the farm to save money. I helped by sewing, canning fruit and refurbishing furniture. I taught my daughters and other members sewing and other activities through the 4-H Club, and I became involved in PTA in grade, intermediate and high school.








When my youngest daughter left for college, I was offered a teaching job at Carondelet High School where I taught for six years. With a Real Estate License, I have done property management for over 40 years.

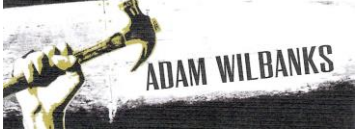

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