



## Sierra Outpost

### Secret Santa via Zoom???

—Trish Darcy

It does not seem possible, but jingle bells will be ringing soon! We hope you all have Sunday, December 13th at 2:00 on your calendars. Since we cannot gather for our traditional holiday gathering, we wanted to plan a fun event that we could do in place of our usual activities.

So the plan is to gather on "Zoom" and enjoy each other's company— you provide your own snack and a beverage of your choice! You will receive an email with an invitation and the link as the event date nears. This will be a low-key event with time to hear from anyone who wishes to chat as well as back and forth conversation.



We are adding a Secret Santa gift exchange into the mix. This is totally optional. Anyone who wants to may participate. But please come, even if a gift exchange is not your thing. We

will do the opening of gifts at the end and anyone who is not in the Secret Santa can leave the meeting as they choose.

Here is how it will work for those wishing to participate:

1. Send your answers to these four questions in an email to [tbdarcy1@gmail.com](mailto:tbdarcy1@gmail.com) :
  - i. What is your favorite candy/food or both?
  - ii. What is your favorite drink-alcoholic or not?
  - iii. What is your favorite color?
  - iv. What is your favorite pastime?

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2. I will collect them and put them in a hat. I will then draw out names for those participating. I will email you the name of the person you are to buy for, the answers to their questions, and their address.
3. You then spend between \$15-\$20 on a gift for them, using their answers as guidance if needed.
4. Wrap it up, but do NOT put your name on it! Then mail it to them or secretly drop it off at their house before December 13th

*(Continued on page 2)*

Anyone who attends the Zoom gathering will have their name put into a drawing for a little door prize!

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without them knowing. If mailing it, use my address as the return address to keep it a secret. 5150 Darrah Road Mariposa, CA 95338.

5. At the end of the Zoom gathering, we will take turns opening them and seeing who our secret Santa was!

We hope to have many

people attend this event for visiting and merriment! We really need this time to connect and this will be a fun time for us all. The Secret Santa will only be a part of it, so please join even if you are not participating in the gift exchange.

Please have your email to me by NOVEMBER 22nd with the answers to the four questions. That way I will know who wants to partake. I can do the name draw and get

the emails back out to you so that you have time to shop and send!

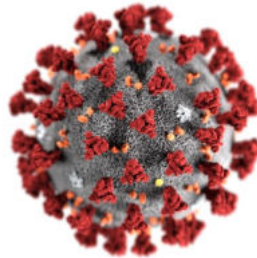
- What is your favorite candy/food or both?
- What is your favorite drink-alcoholic or not?
- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite pastime?



## Health

### Covid Corner

**'Tis the season to be jolly... but careful!**



-Jody Sergienko

We are entering into the holiday season! Like so many things in this strange year, our celebrations will be different. Many of us will be meeting by Zoom, or in much smaller numbers.

This year let us spread holiday cheer and not the pandemic virus.

Suggestions from the CDC to minimize risk for our families and communities.

#### Hosting a holiday gathering

If you will be hosting a celebration, follow [CDC tips for hosting gatherings](#). Below are some additional considerations for hosting a

holiday celebration:

- Host outdoor activities rather than indoor activities as much as possible. If hosting an outdoor event is not possible, and you choose to host an indoor event, avoid crowded, poorly ventilated, or fully enclosed indoor spaces.
- ◆ Increase ventilation by opening windows and doors to the extent that is safe and feasible based on the weather.
- ◆ Host activities with only people from your local area as much as possible.

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- ◆ Limit numbers of attendees as much as possible.
- ◆ Provide updated information to your guests about any COVID-19 safety guidelines and steps in place to prevent the spread of the virus.
- ◆ Provide or encourage attendees to bring supplies to help you and others stay healthy. For example, extra [masks](#) (do not share or swap with others), hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, and tissues.

If you are planning in-person holiday gatherings with people outside of your household, consider asking all guests to strictly avoid contact with people outside of their households for 14 days before the gathering.

If you host a party, take a picture of the group so you know who was there OR keep a list of guests, just in case someone should later find out they had COVID-19.

### People with or exposed to COVID-19

Do not host or participate in any in-person festivities if you or anyone in your household

- Has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has [not met the criteria for when it is safe to be around others](#)
- Has [symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- Is waiting for COVID-19 [viral test](#) results
- May have been [exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days](#)

- Is at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19
- Are at increased risk for severe illness. If you are at [increased risk of severe illness](#) from COVID-19, or live or work with someone at increased risk of severe illness, you should:
  - ◆ Avoid in-person gatherings with people who do not live in your household.
  - ◆ Avoid larger gatherings and consider attending activities that pose lower risk if you decide to attend an in-person gathering with people who do not live in your household.

### What can we do to spread holiday cheer instead of a nasty virus?

1. Keep it simple and host a tiny party! Have premixed cocktails and individual servings set out to tempt your few closest friends. Follow the guidelines above!
2. Do a contactless cookie exchange. Meet at an outdoor spot to swap goodies and cheer.
3. Plan a Christmas movie night with online movie reviews.
4. Host a virtual game night such as Zoom Bingo, or movie trivia. Separated families can each get the same game board and play over Facetime.
5. Join our AAUW community at our December holiday meeting live on Zoom to kick off the merry season.



## Membership

Bonnie Little, Dina Lambert



### Spotlight on Shelly Gerken

—Kim Monson

Shelly Gerken is the ultimate Mariposa Girl. She attended Mariposa High School where she met and married the love of her life, David Gerken. Shelly and Dave had three great kids, but one of them is "in heaven with God" and Shelly is grateful to have had him as long as she did. Dave and Shelly own Alpine Builders here in Mariposa.

Shelly graduated from Fresno State University with a BA and an MA in Speech Pathology. The Merced County School District is lucky to have her on staff, where she works with children as a speech therapist. Shelly has a private practice in speech therapy here in Mariposa as well. So if someone in your family needs help in that area, you know how to get a hold of her. (Hint: she's in the 2020 AAUW Mariposa Branch Directory.)



*Shelly and Dave Gerken*

When not working, Shelly has an active life. She loves to camp, read for relaxation, go biking, take Jazzercise classes, and play pickleball which, of course, is the most fun.

## Event Calendar

November 2	<b>Leadership Team Meeting:</b> 5:30pm, via Zoom
November 11	<b>SIG– Great Decisions:</b> 5:00pm, via Zoom
November 12	<b>SIG– Play Reading:</b> 4:00pm, via Zoom
November 17	<b>SIG– International Study:</b> 5:00pm, via Zoom
November 20	<b>SIG-Hiking:</b> Deadline to send Trish photos of trees from individual hikes
December 1	<b>SIG- Book Group:</b> 4:30pm, via Zoom
December 13	<b>Holiday Gathering:</b> 2:00pm, via Zoom
June 13, 2021	<b>Annual Meeting:</b> 2:00pm, format TBD



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We Send Girls to Science/Math Camp

## SIG Overview

## Special Interest Groups

### International Study

**Tiina Wilson**



Learn about a country, a culture, and a people. We study one country each year and meet monthly.

### Book Group

**Saralynn Nusbaum**



This group meets monthly to discuss both fiction and non-fiction books members chose to read the previous month.

### Great Decisions

**Becky Mock**



This discussion group meets 6-8 times per year to discuss a set of topics developed by the Foreign Policy Administration (FPA).

### Garden Group

**Karen Smith**



The Gardening group meets to discuss a wide range of topics such as the challenges of gardening in the foothills.



Mariposa, CA Branch

**Special Interest Groups  
2020-2021**

### Play Reading Group

**Dawn Johnson**



"The play's the thing!" meets monthly to do cold readings of various plays that are shared by several California branches.

### Hiking Group

**Trish Darcy**



The hiking group meets monthly to enjoy each other's company while hiking new trails in and around Mariposa and Yosemite.

### What's Your Passion?

**Photography?**

**Movie?**

**Ukualadies?**

**Wine and Whine?**

(nothing fancy— just afternoon get-togethers to visit)

**Travel Tips?**

**Meditation?**

**Writers Anonymous?**

**E-power?**

(share new e-device tips)

### Wine Tasting

**Carolyn Baker, Cindy Harp**



The Corks and Forks Wine group meets monthly to experience different types of wines and enjoy them with appetizers and meals paired to complement the varietal being tasted.

**We Sponsor Community Forums**

## SIG - Book

Contact [Saralynn Nusbaum](#)

Our next meeting will be on  
Tuesday, December 1 at 4:30 pm

at our own homes via "Zoom" where we will be discussing:

***The Book of Longings***

by Sue Monk Kidd



Discussion:

***An American Marriage***

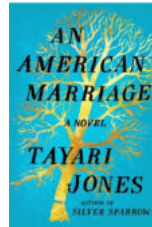
by Tayari Jones

—Notes By Dawn Johnson

Our Book Group discovered that it's hard to praise a novel when you dislike the characters!

An American Marriage, the 2018 best-selling and award-winning novel by Tayari Jones, is the story of an upwardly mobile Black couple whose young marriage ("..... a sapling graft that didn't have time to take") is ruptured by his wrongful conviction for rape and subsequent incarceration.

Although that is the axis of the story, it is more the story of relationships forming and dissolving and not a deep dive nor even an indictment of the American justice system. That frustrated some in our group, who wanted more examination of the legal and social issues involved. But the author stated in an interview that, even though she had two years' worth of research into mass incarcerations of Blacks, most of it ended up on the cutting room floor because the impact of his



imprisonment on all the characters became the real story.

At its heart, this novel is about flawed people whose lives are changed forever by a single event. And because they are flawed, our group basically disliked nearly all of them. After watching a video of Tammy Wynette singing "Stand By Your Man," we discussed whether the wife did or didn't. Then we looked at how a list of adjectives such as Wronged, Loyal, Selfish, Resilient, etc. applied to each character. In the end, some people found little to like in them, deeming their actions self-centered and disrespectful of commitments. Others were sympathetic to their hard choices and found them relatable in some ways.

Although we agreed that we wouldn't want to have lunch with any of them, we acknowledged that it is a beautiful and humanely written novel. Some found it a worthy read; some did not. But we were all left pondering a question we couldn't answer: Why this was an examination of an AMERICAN marriage?



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We Provide Opportunities for Women to Reach Full Potential



SIG: **Garden**

Contact [Karen Smith](#)

## Fall: Time to plant natives

---By Ron Allen,  
UC Master Gardener, Mariposa

Fall is the time to plant California natives. The weather is cooler, the first soaking rains are imminent, and yet there is still plenty of good sunlight. These factors make for good initial foliage growth and root development.

The motivation for adding native plants comes down to one thing: water. Mariposa County enjoys a somewhat hot, but generally Mediterranean climate; we have cool winters, wet springs, and dry summers. California natives are adapted to our long, dry summers. Filling your garden and landscape with natives saves on irrigation expenses once the plants are established. Also, native plants are adapted to local soil types and are resistant to local plant pathogens, insect pests, and herbivores. By gardening with native plants, you will save again on insecticides, soil amendments, deer screens, rodent

traps, etc.

It's easy to get started growing California natives. First, make a survey of your site. Take an inventory of plants already present and try to figure out how to complement them. Choose plants that are adapted and grow well in your local ecological niche. This can depend upon your aesthetic and goals. Do you want attractive ornamental natives? Do you lean toward supporting pollinators? Maybe fire resistance or bank stabilization is key? Please feel free to call our UC Master Gardener Helpline in Mariposa County for suggestions.

If you want a simple approach, you can scatter native annual wildflower seeds, such as California Poppy. If you're keen on helping pollinators--and the monarch butterfly in particular--then set down some

milkweeds in the *Asclepias* genus. These perennials are the only plants upon which monarchs lay their eggs. Good examples are the Narrowleaf and Showy Milkweeds. A great choice among shrubs is the Toyon, an attractive evergreen that can become a small tree. In the summer it is covered with creamy white flowers, drawing bees and butterflies. In the fall, it produces bright red berries that attract birds. It is very fire resistant, and it's one shrub that you can plant close to structures.

If your landscaping plans are ambitious, and you're at an elevation of 3,000 feet or more, you can try planting Douglas Fir seedlings. An excellent companion for these conifers is the Canyon Live Oak whose roots support an ectomycorrhizal fungus beneficial to young Douglas fir growth.

We Open Eyes

## SIG: Play Reading

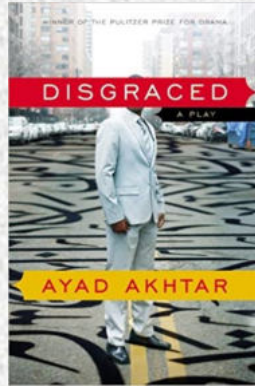
Contact [Dawn Johnson](#)

## No disgrace in reading “Disgraced”

—Dawn Johnson

Those of us old enough to remember the comedian George Carlin and his famous skit, “Seven Words You Can’t Say on TV,” found that many of them appeared in this month’s play, “Disgraced.” Undeterred, our group of eight unabashedly read them with great vigor and expression. It almost sounded like some of us use such words occasionally ourselves.

The language wasn’t the only thing that was colorful. This play was the first we have read with a cover in color. Yes, it was actually contemporary! “Disgraced,” written in 2012 by novelist and screenwriter Ayad Akhtar, won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2013. It’s a modern play about modern topics.



“Disgraced” was only one act, but what an act it was! It focused on a dinner party which violated the social rule of not discussing religion and politics. Things got heated; prejudices were exposed; cultural roots were questioned; inner selves were discovered; secrets were revealed; people turned out not to be what they

seemed. It ended explosively with a surprise that led us to some interesting discussions.

The play read well with crackling, contemporary dialogue. It was fast moving, enough so that the startling end almost took us by surprise. We had to check back to be sure we got it right. Several people in the group had seen it performed live and gave it glowing reviews. All in all, it was an important read.



## SIG: International Study

Contact [Tiina Wilson](#)

The International Study Group had nine members in attendance at our October meeting. Ruffina Roberts started off our studies, covering Egypt's geology, topography, flora & fauna, climate, the economy, and many interesting facts. Did

you know that the Egyptians invented the 365 day calendar? For our calendar year we are going to try to learn as much as we can about this country. Next month, we will be looking at Egypt's religions.

We Value Education

## SIG: Great Decisions

Contact [Becky Mock](#)

—Belinda Gilbert

The Great Decisions group met October 14th via Zoom. An animated decision about climate change ensued ranging from oil drilling in the Arctic as polar ice melts, to pollution caused by agricultural practices.

The article, “Climate Change and the Global Order” focuses on the role of the United States government in climate change negotiations and also on ways individuals, cities, states and corporations can promote conservation and recycling.

The role of the United States government seems to be maintaining world dominance through promoting a fossil fuel economy. We exploit natural resources through hydraulic fracking of oil and natural gas. We are in competition with other countries developing oil reserves in the Arctic. The government withdrew from the Paris Climate Accord which will take effect November 10<sup>th</sup>. The focus of the federal government is not about contributing to global climate change decisions. The United States is not alone in taking this position. Most nations view climate change through the prism of national interests. Several possible solutions are offered in the article about climate change. One is called the “Bottoms Up” approach. Individuals,



cities, states and corporations are becoming proactive at reducing emissions. “Smart Cities” technology enables cities to collect data and manage resources and services more efficiently. One half of the largest

cities in the United States have adopted climate action plans.

Corporations are moving to use renewable energy sources and to run on using recyclable products. There are several “Green Technologies” which are based on creating markets in biomass, hydroelectric, geothermal, wind and solar power, clean coal and methane and third generation nuclear power plants. Progress is being made in educating farmers in sustainable farming practices.

In 2019, the United Nations adopted a 10-year action plan to reduce greenhouse gases by 45%, and to increase electrical production from renewable energy by 80% by the year 2030. The conclusion we came to as a group, besides voting for candidates who support green initiatives, was to support green technologies such as solar power, sustainable water use, and changing the way we eat to plant-based diets.

We Inspire Life-Long Learning

**SIG: Hiking**Contact [Trish Darcy](#)**Wildlife: hikers explore on their own**

Hikers this month have gone off on their own, reveling in what the season is offering.



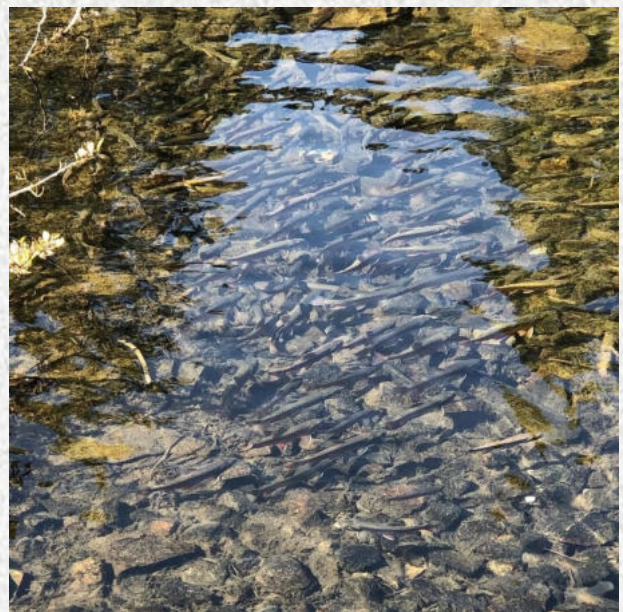
Above: Jody captured this silhouette of a Steller's Jay while hiking in Yosemite.

Upper Right: Rebecca caught the beautiful shot while hiking in Yosemite Valley.



Lower Right: Trish spotted these fish on a hike to Bennetville outside Tioga Pass in the lakes beyond Bennetville.

Below :These ducks came to see if they could have lunch with Trish in twin Lakes out of Bridgeport.

**We Send Girls to Science/Math Camp**[To Page 1](#)

**AAUW - Mariposa Branch**

Leadership Business Meeting

October 5, 2020

5:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**Members:**

Cindy Harp, Co-President

Dina Lambert, Finance Officer

Rebecca Swisher, Recording Secretary

Jody Sergienko, Co-President

Bonnie Little, Membership

Kim Monson

Trish Darcy

Meeting called to order at 5:37 p.m. by Jody Sergienko.

**Minutes** (*Rebecca Swisher*)

- Rebecca Swisher reported that the September 2020 meeting minutes were approved electronically and submitted to Jill Rowney for inclusion in the October 2020 newsletter.

**Membership Update** (*Dina Lambert, Bonnie Little*)

- Bonnie Little reported that the current membership total is 74 members and that there is a new member. Dina Lambert coordinated that creation of the directories, and Bonnie mailed a total of 70 to people, which cost \$126.00. Those present said that they appreciated the effort that went into creating, printing, and mailing the directories. Dina stated that it used to take months to get the directories out to everyone. Rebecca Swisher encouraged the use of this distribution method in the future, acknowledging that there was a lot of effort required for the mailings.

**Finance Report** (*Dina Lambert*)

- September 2020:
  - Total income: \$312.00 (dues)
  - Total expenses: \$844.72 (\$237.00 national and state dues; \$356.00 insurance; \$6.00 website)
  - Balance: \$18,585.49

Cindy Harp moved to accept the September 2020 report as presented. Trish Darcy seconded. All in favor with no nays or abstentions.

- Donations:

Dina Lambert presented a discussion of Mariposa AAUW's tax status and the impact on donors. She noted that the branch is a 501(c)(4), and therefore, donations are not tax deductible. The tax status was set up to align with AAUW national so that they can submit federal taxes. Dina stated that she would like for our donors to be able to make tax-deductible donations. She contacted Sandi Gabe who responded that AAUW California has a special projects fund and recommended that AAUW Mariposa explore using this route. Dina submitted an e-mail to the special

We Sponsor Community Forums



projects group to find out the process for donations. She also looked into using the Community Foundation, but Marilyn Saunders stated that donations to AAUW Mariposa would not qualify under their parameters. Dina will let the Leadership Team know the outcome of her research. She mentioned that this situation will likely come up again, and it will be a good idea to have this process documented for future needs.

### **Standing Projects:**

- Dinner with a Scientist (*Marilyn Saunders*)  
On hold.
- Backpack (*Cathy Owens, Kim Monson, & Rebecca Swisher*)  
Deferred until time to discuss this 2020-2021 summer event.
- Tech Trek (*Trish Darcy*)
  - **2020 Tech Trek Event:**  
Trish Darcy reported that the committee is still working on planning the event for the 2020 Tech Trek girls, but the current prohibition on in-person gatherings has halted the preferred plan. The committee's next meeting is October 14, 2020. Current options are now to scrap the event completely, wait and see if we can provide an in-person event in August, or put together a virtual event.
  - **2021 Tech Trek Event:**  
Trish stated that notice was received from AAUW California that this event will be held virtually. The format was beta tested successfully by another branch. Branches have been asked to hold off on collecting applications for this event until after January 1, 2021. AAUW state has said that branches will be allowed to send more girls to the virtual camp.
  - Trish will follow-up with a letter to AAUW state Tech Trek requesting a review of how to manage the girls selected for the 2020 camp (e.g., allow branches to send 2020 instead of 2021 girls, allow branches to send a combination of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls, etc.). Those present voiced frustration with the perceived barriers placed on branches' ability to support the girls selected for 2020 camp.
- Tech Connect: Multimedia Messages (*Rebecca Swisher and Kim Monson*)  
Kim Monson presented the morning announcement that she will provide to the high school regarding the Tech Connect project. Discussion occurred regarding ensuring that we are able to vet the video before it is posted live on the AAUW channel.

### **Fundraisers:**

- "Mad Hatter's Party" (*Sandi Gabe*)  
On hold

### **Programs:**

- College Partnership with Reedley College in Oakhurst (*Cindy Harp*)

**We Provide Opportunities for Women to Reach Full Potential**

On hold until further notice

- **Support for Local College Students (*Jody Sergienko*)**  
Jody Sergienko said that she is going to explore the Board to Board's recent post about mentoring. The National site has some information about vocational training. She is going to do some more research into this topic.
- **Mental Health in the Time of a Pandemic (*Jody Sergienko*)**  
Jody Sergienko proposed that the next public program cover the topic of mental health in the time of the pandemic and adjustments to new realities. Those present supported this idea. Jody Sergienko suggested that we do this as a Zoom meeting. She will look further into this topic and voiced that there is the potential for this to be a series. Kim Monson moved that we move forward with exploring and planning this program topic. Bonnie Little seconded. All in favor with no nays or abstentions.
- **Report on Hospital Bond Forum via Zoom (*Trish Darcy*)**  
Trish Darcy said that there were only 13 attendees, including three individuals from the Mariposans for a Healthier Future committee and hospital staff. She said that there was good information presented and that she enjoyed hearing the answers to the questions. Trish thanked Dina Lambert for managing the technology aspect of the program and for posting the recording. Trish reported that our post to Facebook on this event is still getting likes. Others who missed it have been able to listen to the recording and review information on this topic (e.g., Facebook: Yes on Measure N).
- **APHA Racial Equity Guide webinar series (*Rebecca Swisher*)**  
Rebecca Swisher said that she brought this topic to the table as an idea for this year's program. She said that this could be put on the back burner for later use now that we are moving ahead with the mental health in the time of COVID.

#### **Old Business:**

- **Purchase of New PA System and A/V Equipment:**  
Jody Sergienko stated that she collected the name and contact information for a vendor for the PA equipment. She has not followed up with projectors yet.

#### **New Business:**

- **Thank You Cards**  
Signing Thank You Card:
  - The Leadership Team will meet at the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Pavilion Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. to sign the thank you card for the donation that was made towards the A/V equipment.
  - Dina Lambert will look into purchasing more AAUW Thank You cards.
- **Holiday Celebration (*Trish Darcy*)**  
The group discussed ideas for the AAUW Mariposa Holiday Party. It was decided to do a Secret Santa and Zoom event. Trish will write up article. Everyone is welcome to come to the Zoom event, regardless of whether they participate in the

We Open Eyes

Secret Santa portion.

**Newsletter Assignments:**

- Member Profile:  
November 2020 – Kim Monson
- Lead article (Admin Overview):  
November 2020 – Trish Darcy (Holiday Party)
- Board-to-Board:  
Cindy Harp reported that the Board to Board comes out after our newsletter, so sometimes the information is no longer relevant. The decision was made to send out a separate e-mail to members with the pertinent Board-to-Board information ([members@aauwmariposa.com](mailto:members@aauwmariposa.com)).
- COVID Update:  
November 2020 – Jody Sergienko (self-care/ how to stay sane in the time of COVID)
- **Leadership Meeting Lead:**  
November 2020: (agenda) – Cindy Harp

**Branch Buzz:**

November 2020 – Trish Darcy

**Action Items:**

Task Description	Reason a Priority	Deadline	Assigned To	Next Step
Coordinate Holiday Party	Provide opportunity for social interaction among members	December 1, 2020	Trish Darcy & Others	Provide details of event to members via newsletter.

**Upcoming Dates:**

11/02/2020: Leadership Team Meeting at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

12/13/2020: Holiday Party at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom

06/13/2021: Annual Membership Meeting at 2:00 p.m. with format to be determined

Meeting Adjourned at 6:49 p.m. by Jody Sergienko. (Trish Darcy moved to adjourn the meeting. Kim Monson seconded. All in favor with no nays or abstentions.)

**ROTARY CLUB OF MARIPOSA YOSEMITE**

***Auction***



**November 11-24, 2020**

**ONLINE**

**ROTARY SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION**



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**Auction catalog and register to bid at**

**[www.auctria.com/auction/rotaryscholarships2020](http://www.auctria.com/auction/rotaryscholarships2020)**

**We Inspire Life-Long Learning**



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Board Officers: 2020-2021

**Leadership Team:**

[Trish Darcy](#)  
[Cindy Harp](#)  
[Dina Lambert](#)  
[Bonnie Little](#)  
[Kim Monson](#)  
[Jody Sergienko](#)  
[Rebecca Swisher](#)

*The Sierra Outpost*, newsletter of the Mariposa Branch of AAUW, is usually published on the 1st of each month. It is available online in pdf format. If you cannot access the on-line copy please contact Jill Rowney. Deadline for submissions is the 25th of the month. Send information/questions to editor: [jillrowney@yahoo.com](mailto:jillrowney@yahoo.com)

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