

AAUW Virtual Tech Trek Camps a success



Photo Sandy Fox-Sohner

From left: Camille Bradley, Madeline Carpenter, Madeline Sheng-Williams, Kaitlyn Kinsey, Aria Falahati, Meher Jeyakrishnan, and Lane Massa. (Not shown: Miracle Gu, Maya Shu, Viviana Sanchez, Lils McCarthy)

Submitted by Jan Cushman

American Association of University Women, Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch honored the enthusiastic eighth-grade Lamorinda girls who received scholarships to attend the AAUW California Virtual Tech Trek camps this summer at a reception at the Orinda Community Church patio on Sept. 17. The six girls who attended the event brought their “wearable tech”

that they had constructed in the mornings of the camp. The creations included hats, a backpack, a volleyball and a belt. The other four girls created a corset, a fan bracelet, a fan mounted on a phone holder and a hat. They all designed and programmed their creations to turn LED lights on and off and to move objects on their creations using positional and continuous servomechanisms. Each creation was decorated to include their individual values, strengths and interests. The girls also

had to learn about a successful woman in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) field.

In the afternoons, after a presentation by a woman in STEM, there were two hands-on workshops each day focusing on DNA, water, wind, constellations and building a foldscope microscope and a spectroscope. Each evening there was another presentation on a STEM topic.

In addition to the 10 girls sent to camp, AAUW-OML branch member Sheila Apte and six former Tech Trekkers (Camille Bradley, Michelle Shen, Giorgia Stankus, Emma Wong, Jada Hembrador and Emilia Gutman) volunteered as camp counselors.

The girls said that they really enjoyed the camp workshops and presentations by women working in STEM fields. No one complained about the amount of time spent on Zoom since there were so many hands-on activities that the girls worked on alone or in break-out rooms.

Overall, Tech Trek served 639 campers in California from 94 branches at eight camps (six residential, two virtual) across California, staffed by a community of more than 230 volunteers, over half of whom were Tech Trek alumnae.

Sydney Paige Foundation on track to serve over 70K underserved students

Submitted by
Rebecca Metz

With the new school year underway, the Sydney Paige Foundation, founded by Moraga-mom Courtney Brockmeyer, has had an incredibly busy month. That's because there are tens of thousands of kids in underserved communities that depend on the Foundation to provide new, high-quality backpacks, school supplies and books to ensure they have the tools and confidence to be successful in school.

In the past two-plus years of unprecedented circumstances, the Sydney Paige Foundation, like thousands of other organizations, has weathered slowdowns in deliveries and supply chain sna-



Courtney Brockmeyer

Photo provided

fus, a shutdown at the port of Oakland, and inflationary cost increases in shipping and materials. In spite of these challenges, Sydney Paige is on track to serve 70,000 students this year, up from 55,000 last year, and on top of the 140,000 already served to date. For information, visit www.sydneypaige.org

In Memory

Lois Elizabeth (Epp) Schroeder

Aug. 8, 1939 – Sept. 7, 2022



Lois Elizabeth (Epp) Schroeder passed away at home on Sept. 7, 2022 after a two and a half year long battle with pancreatic cancer. Lois was born on a settler farm in Laird, Saskatchewan, Canada on Aug. 8, 1939 and moved to Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada when she was a little girl. After graduating from high school at the age of 16, she worked in a local bank for a few years since as the youngest child in a Mennonite family, she felt her role was to stay home and take care of her father. Fortunately her older brother began to randomly leave college brochures around the house to try to convince Lois, who was stubborn to her core and could not be talked into doing anything that was not her idea, to leave home. Thank goodness that this had the desired effect –

Lois enrolled in Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas when she was 19, majoring in English, and met Duane Schroeder when he was an 18-year-old freshman. It was destiny for these two; they married in 1961 at 20 and 21.

After finishing college, Lois and Duane moved their family to the Bay Area, eventually settling in Orinda in 1972 with their three children. Lois found jobs quickly, volunteering in the children's schools when they were young and then working for the Orinda Union School District in the district office for the rest of her career. She retired in the late-'90s when she was the Personnel Coordinator for the district.

Even while working, Lois had many adventures both with and without Duane. She enjoyed traveling all over the world – climbing Ayer's rock in Australia, walking Hadrian's wall in England, and even enduring the breast cancer three day walk in California TWICE to raise money for cancer research, to name just a few. She and Duane visited 49 countries in all! As further evidence of her courageous spirit, 20 plus years ago, she decided that she wanted to live in England for a bit which was natural growing up a Canadian and a royal subject. After much research, and fully supported by Duane, she ended up booking a room for two months, sight unseen, in a little village called Lee on the coast of Devon. The people of this town welcomed her with open arms and it became her summer home away from home that she shared with many of her friends and family over the years. She subsequently mixed in yearly summer classes at Oxford (OUSSA), continuing her education with her ever-curious mind and creating life-long friendships with her classmates over English literature, popcorn, and glasses of Prosecco.

When home, through an exchange program called Mennonite Your Way, Lois and Duane hosted many Mennonite tourists as they traveled through California. This voluntary sharing of their home with strangers was indicative of their generosity and heart. Lois made friends wherever she went and was amazing at cultivating those friendships all over the world. She was a force of nature and will be sorely missed by everyone who knew and loved her.

Lois is survived by her husband of 61 years, Duane; daughter Kirsten Rogers (Peter); son Darren (Sonya); daughter Allison Hennessy (Sean); 11 grandchildren (Laura Hackford (Toby), Kyle, Matt, and Jon Rogers; Nicholas, Zachary, and Natalie Schroeder; Shannon, Kacie, Aimee, and Tyler Hennessy) and two great-grandsons (Luka and Ollie Hackford), plus numerous nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, please continue her legacy: give what you can to help others, make friends wherever you go, and strive to make the world a better place.

In Memory

Richard (Dick) Holt

Sept. 11, 1938 – Aug. 12, 2022



After a lifetime of service to country and community, Richard W. Holt of Lafayette passed away Friday, Aug. 12, 2022 due to heart failure. He was 83. He was a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., and spent 20 years on active duty before transitioning to civilian life in 1981.

He was born Sept. 11, 1938, in Port Huron, Mich., to Richard Watkins and Estella Mahon Holt. After the untimely death of his father when he was 3, he moved with his mother and sister to Carmel. There he made many longtime friends, including Robin Burnham, whom he would re-meet after college and marry in 1962.

Dick joined the Naval Reserve in high school. Through a competitive exam, he received an appointment to the Naval Academy, graduating in

1961 with a BS degree in marine engineering.

Dick served on four ships, culminating with the USS Enterprise nuclear aircraft carrier in Alameda. He was pleased to be selected for one of the earliest classes of the Navy's Destroyer School in Newport, R.I. Along the way he earned a master's degree in human resources management from Pepperdine University. He retired with the rank of lieutenant commander.

In civilian life, Dick used his engineering and management skills at Kaiser Steel. After that, he worked in both commercial and residential real estate as a broker. Committed to improving his surroundings and helping others, Dick was involved in community causes including his children's schools, coaching youth sports, driving for Meals on Wheels, and serving on the boards of several non-profits. He served on the City of Lafayette's Planning Commission (for 25 years) twice as its chairman, and on the city Environmental Task Force.

Dick was an active Rotarian for 31 years, including a term as president. He helped found and organize the annual Concert at the Res at the Lafayette Reservoir to benefit music programs in the schools and spearheaded Rotary's collaboration with the Lafayette Community Foundation to build a permanent stage in the Reservoir in 2012.

As a result of many years devoted to the community, he and his wife, Robin, were jointly named Lafayette Citizens of the Year in 2017.

Dick loved sharing good conversation and laughter with family and friends. He was known for bringing out piles of sweaters for everyone once the evening chill set in on the patio. He planned a bicycle trek through the Netherlands and Belgium when his children were in their 20s and had fun building playhouses, stores, and puppet theaters out of cardboard boxes with his grandchildren. He loved running, sailing, singing, playing the guitar, and costume parties. He always wore his tuxedo on New Year's Eve. Dick and Robin maintained a second home in Carmel, and he always said he was going to come back someday as a dog on the Carmel beach.

He was devoted to his family: soulmate of nearly 60 years, Robin, daughter Stannie of San Mateo, Calif., recently deceased son Tyler (Anne) of Bethesda, Md., son Spencer (Karen) of San Diego, and four grandchildren, Lilly, Daniel, Gavin, and Colin Holt. He also will be missed by his sister Sally Holt Jett, and many in-laws, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

A memorial service is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 22, at 4 p.m. at the Lafayette Veterans' Building. Donations may be sent to: Lafayette Community Foundation, www.lafayettecf.org or the Cancer Support Community, www.cancersupport.net/donate.

Lamorinda Weekly

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