



HISTORIAN'S HISTORY!

*Previous articles outlined the progression of AWC philanthropy work and our pivot from many charities to fewer, and first steps from checks to projects resulting in our current three-prong approach. Concurrently AWC's new membership profile also shifted to wanting projects. That reinforcement allowed an appointment of a dedicated liaison for each philanthropy beginning in 2010. This system has been in place since then. Now as members volunteer on projects they become an ad hoc committee for each philanthropy liaison and, thus 'many hands make light work.' **Though the Alamo Women's Club doesn't have a huge membership, our impact, as you read below, is extensive!***

PURPLE PAILS began in **2009-10** introduced by the Philanthropy Chair to broaden the mission of AWC's giving. Purple Pails was purposeful so members could recycle small things for new charities and build on the giving of toiletries to VESTIA and eyeglasses to Lions Club, both done by AWC for years. Members discussed and approved the idea at a business meeting in 2010. At the time, it had no name, but when the Philanthropy Chair purchased the containers they were all Purple! Thus, **Purple Pails** was born!



YOUTH HOMES formed in 1965 it operates under the CCC Dept. of Social Services. The residences house foster kids removed from homes for their protection. Over time, the home numbers have increased and decreased, however, four remain today - 2 in Concord, 1 in Lafayette, and 1 in Pleasant Hill.

In **2010** the partnership begins when AWC's Philanthropy Chair, Vicki Koc, researched a way to benefit an oft ignored charity sector: **teen foster youth** – Vicki found Youth Homes. In 2011 Peggy Fleming agreed to be AWC's liaison where she developed the relationship and continues as liaison today. Peggy created classes geared to enhance the kids' daily living skills. These classes were taught to residents by AWC members such budgeting money, banking, interview skills, resume writing, healthy living and college 101.

Cooking classes continue to be taught in our kitchen by our member Patt Larkin. She began her fifth year in Oct. 2018. Classes such as "3 ways to cook hamburger", and "all about starches" are two examples of Patt's classes.



Member Peggy Fleming (left) accepts Award from 49er representatives



Jewelry making, knitting, crochet, looming, photography, and painting were also offered. Jewelry making classes were intended to be a 2-month summer enrichment program begun in 2014. The students requested the program continue and appreciate that the proceeds from sales of jewelry they make, return to them! Peggy's AWC volunteers set up, sell, and take-down at local sales locations. As of 2018, the combined earnings meant \$35,000 went to scholarships for foster youth. Youth Homes appreciates AWC and, in particular, Peggy who YH recommended in 2014 for the SF 49er Quarterback Community Award – Peggy was a runner up and received \$1,000 for Youth Homes. Photo shows Peggy accepting her award at Levi Stadium in 2014.

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GEORGE MARK CHILDREN'S HOUSE surfaced in 2012 as a philanthropy through AWC's parent umbrella organization. For the first few years a monetary donation, member tours of the facility and help at the Halloween event were how AWC supported GMCH. Then in 2013 an angel liaison, **Diane Stafford**, took over the position and discovered many available hands-on projects and began coordinating AWC volunteers.



The library was organized and several thousand books coded by reading level. AWC volunteers organized CD and DVD libraries as well. Each year we make and donate 10 filled Easter baskets and help at GMCH's Annual Fall Gala along with stuffing and stamping over 2,700 envelopes for the event. The staff is thrilled when AWC members arrive!

Every other year a prom is organized for any teenager who has been at George Mark or is currently there. Many of these children don't attend a prom at their schools, so this is often a once-in-a-lifetime event for them and a wonderful experience. AWC provides volunteers for registration, makeup, and helping wherever needed. It's a fabulous evening for these teens.

In 2017 a request was made for quilts, not as wall art, but for each bed. AWC quilters went to work and each of the 8 themed rooms received a coordinating twin-size quilt. These quilts help make each room "homelike". It was a huge project filled with love. Hats off to AWC members who quilted, and absorbed the costs, too.

Our liaison, **Diane Stafford** writes that AWC will continue to be a source of 'helpers' at events and that *"GMCH is a special place and the staff and the families who go there have expressed many times how much it means to have the connection with AWC."*



was brought to AWC by the 2012 Philanthropy Chair, Pamela Singh, voted in that year for *Done-in-a-Day* projects only. AWC began a monetary donation the following year. Our current liaison, **Nina Rowe** volunteered in 2012 and is still its philanthropy liaison today!

Nina explains that AWC annually sponsors the Mom's Day event in May and the Dad's Day event in October and provides volunteers. These events allow parents and/or caregivers a chance to see the children interacting in their preschool setting. This year we added a book collection donation for We Care and provided 40 plus books for the children's use.

Nina notes that We Care Children's Services is focusing more and more of its attention on mental health issues with preschoolers and their families. We Care is one of the only preschools where children diagnosed with mental health issues attend daily class with "typically developing" children. A specialist in each classroom aids with behavior therapies as needed.



We Care's developmental preschool for children aged 18 mos to 3 yrs, provides services such as physical, speech and occupational therapy. Finally, We Care staff provides one-on-one, in-home and/or off-site children's therapy which includes identifying needs of the entire family; this part is its Wrap Around Program.



...started with Dawnie Rocca, a member of AWC, who saw an opportunity to join with Noralyn Giles, AWC's current FNO liaison, to work together for the good of people who live in our community and have special needs. Dawnie and Noralyn found that raising special needs children was an experience of wonderful surprise and joy as well as deep learning. Moments of desperation also arose as Dawnie and Noralyn struggled to find a place where their children belonged. They believed their exceptional kids needed a place to build and grow relationships in a safe place. From this desire and search for inclusion **Friday Night Out** was born. This January 2019 marks our 3rd anniversary for **Friday Night Out!**

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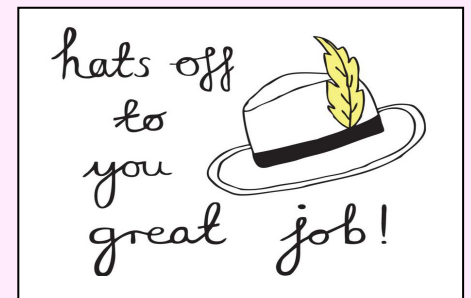


set up and shake a leg with our participants: an awesome connection!

AWC has been a great part of FNO's success! The continued support and growth in that relationship makes a huge difference in FNO's goal, "Creating Community for People with Special Needs".

All our liaisons love the missions of their philanthropies and bend over backwards in helping each of them. Hats off to: **Peggy Fleming, Diane Leventhal, Diane Stafford, Annette Cohen, Cyndie Harrison, Carol Weldin, Noralyn Giles, and Nina Rowe**, and of course, this year's Philanthropy Chair, **Linda Musselwhite**.

Each philanthropy sings their praises as to what a great help their liaison is to their mission and how, through these women, they are thankful for the Alamo Women's Club and its membership for stepping up to help!



Vicki Koc, Historian