May is the month we all celebrate Mother’s Day, and I want to wish all those involved with children a joyous day. On this day in light of the many wars that we as a nation are involved in, I encourage you to read the Mother’s Day proclamation written by Julia Howe in 1870 on this page as a reminder that war for any reason is unacceptable. As we have seen over the centuries, war only creates more war.

In support of our local youth who are deeply involved in bringing attention to climate change, I attended the first "Climate Action Night" at Santa Rosa Junior College. It was an amazing event, and I got to talk to students about the various legislation that is on the table both in Washington DC and locally. At the event folks were able to write postcards to their representatives on bills that they were inspired to support using a "Climate Action Postcards Script" handout that was available. Watching students writing the postcards and experiencing how well informed students were, it gave me hope. A special shout out to local high school teacher Sunny Galbreath who helped organize the event, and for the support she provides these young people.

Please note: To get information on the New Green Deal, come to a town hall happening on Wednesday, May 15 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at Garrett Hall at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds to get information and answer all your questions. For more information go to www.conservation action.org

Hope to see you at our monthly meeting on May 15. We are planning on doing a special commemorative wall calendar for 2020 and will begin discussing the process at this meeting.

Something to Think About: “The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”– Alice Malsenior Walker (born February 9, 1944, Eatonton, Georgia, U.S.), American writer whose novels, short stories, and poems are noted for their insightful treatment of African-American culture, including notably *The Color Purple* (1982).
NOW Sonoma County Chapter Minutes of April 17, 2019

Meeting was called to order at 1:05 PM.

Minutes of March 2019 meeting were accepted as submitted. Agenda was accepted with additions.

Financial - The Post Office Box snafu was successfully corrected and a 6-month payment was made. Two bills were paid for the phone and Hosting matters. National NOW sent us membership payments for January and February 2019. MSC to thank National and to ask them about payments from 2017 and 2018. Elaine will phone and write to National to request the membership list and these past membership accounts.

Website - is doing well, is updated and looks great.

2020 Plan - There is a June meeting with all the various committees attending. MSC to investigate the process of creating a calendar displaying suffragist photos and histories.

New Business
Letter was received from the Commission on the Status of Women - with an invitation to:
Empowered Women Empower Women
Amplifying Women’s Voices
May 4, 2019 from 1-3 pm
Sonoma Valley regional library, 755 West Napa St., Sonoma, CA

There is a question as to which County Supervisors voted to cut major funding for the Commission.

Discussion - Our next event - possible showing of a film or a series of films. This will include fund raising for the 2020 Event. The place for this film showing will be determined.

Announcements - MSC to donate $25 to the Senior Advocacy Services Mothers Day flower project which delivers bouquets to women who don’t have families and are in care facilities.

Meeting adjourned at 2 PM.
Celebrate Mother's Day and Memorial Day.
May Highlights in US Women’s History

May 1, 1950 – Gwendolyn Brooks becomes the first African-American woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, named Library of Congress's Consultant in Poetry (later called Poet Laureate) in 1985

May 5, 1938 – Dr. Dorothy H. Andersen presents results of her medical research identifying the disease cystic fibrosis at a meeting of the American Pediatric Association

May 6 – 12 Nurses Week

May 8, 1914 – President Woodrow Wilson signs a Proclamation designating the second Sunday in May as Mother’s Day

May 10, 1872 – Victoria Woodhull is nominated as the first woman candidate for U.S. president for the Equal Rights Party

May 12, 1968 – A 12-block Mother's Day march of “welfare mothers” is held in Washington, D.C., led by Coretta Scott King accompanied by Ethel Kennedy

May 15, 1970 – Anna Mae Hays and Elizabeth P. Hoisington officially receive their ranks as U.S. Army Generals, becoming the first women to do so

May 21, 1932 – Amelia Earhart Putnam becomes the first woman to complete a solo-transatlantic flight by flying 2,026 miles from Newfoundland to Ireland in just under 15 hours

May 21, 1973 – Lynn Genesko, a swimmer, receives the first athletic scholarship awarded to a woman (University of Miami)

May 29, 1977 – Janet Guthrie becomes the first woman to qualify for and complete the Indy 500 car race

May 29, 1943 – “Rosie the Riveter” by Norman Rockwell appears on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post

“Jailed for Freedom” Pin, 1917

The National Woman’s Party gave silver pins, representing a cell door with a heart-shaped padlock, to members who had been “jailed for freedom.”

In 1917, militant suffragists staged a months-long vigil outside the White House. Tolerated at first, the picketers drew increasing criticism after the United States entered World War I. More than ninety women were arrested for “obstructing traffic” and sent to prison, where they suffered mistreatment and waged hunger strikes. The resulting publicity helped put pressure on Congress to consider a suffrage amendment.

ERA Charm Bracelet, 1972

In 1972, Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which would guarantee men and women equal rights under state and federal law, and sent it to the states for ratification. This bracelet, representing eleven of the thirty-five states that ratified the ERA, was worn by Alice Paul, who drafted the original amendment in 1923.

From 1972 to 1982, supporters campaigned to get the required thirty-eight states to ratify the amendment. But the effort was opposed and ultimately defeated by those who feared the ERA’s moral and legal impact on American society.
Throughout history, color has been a way to provide instant visual recognition. The colors associated with women’s suffrage represented the many sides of the cause. The British women’s suffrage colors were purple, white, and green. Purple, white, and gold were the colors of the American suffrage movement. So, why these colors and why the difference from one side of the pond to the other?

When the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) in England was looking for a color scheme to distinguish their political movement, they chose purple, white, and green. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, editor of Votes for Women, a weekly newspaper, explained “purple, as everyone knows is the royal colour, it stands for the royal blood that flows in the veins of every suffragette, the instinct of freedom and dignity—white stands for purity in private and public life—green is the colour of hope and the emblem of spring.”

To deflect the impression of masculinity that was projected upon the women’s suffrage movement, women were encouraged to wear dresses in delicate fabrics and colors, with white often the color of choice. Sashes of purple and green were worn over the white dress.

Dresses and sashes were not the only way the colors of the women’s suffrage movement were incorporated into everyday life in England. Tri-color shoes and even tri-color underwear was sold. The Elswick bicycle for ladies (Elswick Cycle Company, Newcastle) was enameled in the WSPU colors. Brooches and badges supporting the movement were commissioned and sold. The Holloway Prison brooch was designed by Sylvia Pankhurst and awarded to WSPU members who were imprisoned. The broad arrow (symbol of conflict) contained the colors of the movement.

In the United States, gold replaced green as a color representative of the women’s suffrage movement. The use of gold goes back to 1867 when Kansas was considering passage of a state suffrage referendum. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony adopted the Kansas state flower, the sunflower, as a symbol of the suffrage cause. Soon, gold pins, ribbons, and sashes, as well as yellow roses became symbols of the cause.

The Suffragist, Vol. 1 No. 4, published on December 6, 1913, describes the symbolism of the colors. “Purple is the color of loyalty, constancy to purpose, unswerving steadfastness to a cause. White, the emblem of purity, symbolizes the quality of our purpose; and gold, the color of light and life, is as the torch that guides our purpose, pure and unswerving.” Simplified, the tri-colors signified loyalty, purity, and life.

Just like their British counterparts, American women were imprisoned during the fight for the right to vote. A “Jailed for Freedom” pin was presented to members of the National Woman’s Party who served prison sentences for picketing the White House in the cause of women’s suffrage. The pin was based on the Holloway Brooch.
Alicia Garza, Ai-jen Poo and Cecile Richards want to build a wall of women. And they’re launching a new political organization in order to do it.

On Monday, these three women, along with a group of other prominent activists, launched Supermajority, an organization focused on creating tangible political power for American women. The name is inspired by the fact that women make up more than half of the American population and more than half of the electorate — 54 percent during the 2018 midterms — yet are severely underrepresented in government and in legislative priorities. (Despite seeing a surge in women running for office and winning in 2018, women still make up only 23.7% of Congress.)

“Women still lack political power and we still lack legislative power,” Garza told HuffPost. “And for us that doesn’t make sense. We are the majority of the country. We are the majority of volunteers, of voters, of donors, and we think we should have equal power.”

“What we are launching today is a home for activism,” Richards added. “The purpose here is to make sure that every woman in America has the opportunity to get the information she needs, the training she needs and the connection with other women she needs to be the most powerful and shape the direction of America.”

The founding members of Supermajority include Richards, the former president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund; Garza, a co-founder of the Black Lives Matter Global Network and principal of Black Futures Lab; and Poo, the director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

Together, they plan to engage, train and mobilize 2 million women across the United States this year alone with the intention of mobilizing “millions more” by 2020. And they plan to do it through a truly multiracial and multigenerational coalition. Part of this coalition will involve partnerships with other, more established women-focused organizations, like Planned Parenthood.

One of the most ambitious (and immediate) goals Supermajority has is to craft the New Deal for Women, a set of policies that, like the Green New Deal, people could line up behind and point to. “Women’s issues” are in reality wide-ranging, and the organizing around them tends to be piecemeal. And as Garza stressed to HuffPost, “women’s issues” don’t affect just women.

“We want to make sure that the issues that women care about get seen as national imperatives, and not just issues that impact only women,” she said. “The issues that impact us, impact the majority of the country.”

To craft this New Deal for Women, Supermajority staffers will be going on a “listening tour” across the nation, gathering data and speaking to a diverse cross-section of American women. What they hear on this tour will determine the precise legislative agenda of the group moving forward. Garza told HuffPost that they expect the agenda of the New Deal for Women to be set by this fall.

In 2018, the women behind Supermajority did something similar, stopping in states such as Tennessee, Wisconsin and Iowa. They met with very different groups of American women: teachers, nurses, activists, students, low-wage workers and political candidates. They wanted to understand how American women were showing up and stepping up during such an unprecedented political moment.

“Over and over, women told us that our political process as it functions (or doesn’t function) now neither speaks to nor works for women,” wrote Richards, Poo, Garza, Deidre Schifeling and Katherine Grainger in a November piece for Glamour magazine.

Supermajority will aim to change that.

It remains unclear precisely what role Supermajority will play leading up to the 2020 presidential election — Garza, Poo and Richards told HuffPost that it is still too early to determine whether the organization will be endorsing a presidential candidate — but it will certainly be a presence. The group will work to mobilize progressive voters in the primary and general elections, with a particular focus on issues such as maternal mortality, raising wages, paid family leave, family separation, voting rights and reproductive justice.

“The truth is, women are watching all of the candidates and they’re listening,” Poo said. “They’re listening for which candidates are gonna address their priorities. And we’re gonna be amplifying them.”
The Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women and La Luz present:

Empowered Women Empower Women
Amplifying Women’s Voices
May 4, 2019 from 1-3pm
Sonoma Valley regional library, 755 West Napa St., Sonoma, CA

WHAT BROUGHT US HERE? WHERE ARE WE GOING?
Local women involved in public life and elected officials including supervisor Susan Gorin and Santa Rosa councilwoman Victoria Fleming, will discuss their careers, what caused them to seek election or appointment, including the challenges that they face and continue to face. Opportunities to serve on local boards, commissions and committees, through appointment or election will be discussed.

WE WILL DISCUSS AND TRY TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- Why are so few women involved in public decisions?
- Why did so many women run for election in 2018?
- Why do so many women feel like they need to have all the answers and be perfect to express their opinion in public? What are the special skills that women bring to the public decision-making as mothers, grandmothers, working with retired women and young women just starting their careers?
- How do individual decisions affecting government decisions

Suffrage Sash, around 1910

For the suffragist who wore this yellow sash in the early 1900s, the color of the silk was as meaningful as the “Votes for Women” slogan printed on it.

After Kansas suffragists adopted the state symbol of the sunflower for a campaign in 1867, yellow became the symbolic color of the national women’s suffrage movement. Supporters were urged to “show your colors” by wearing yellow ribbons, buttons, and sashes.

1920-2020
Get ready to celebrate the 100th Anniversary Passage of 19th Amendment
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Regular Membership $40/year. $75/two years. $115/3 years.
Reduced dues $15. - $30.

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