

## MARY COX, AAUW-MH BOARD SECRETARY

Most of us know her as the gracious hostess at the amazing lakeside estate where she and her husband, Mike, host the annual AAUW-MH fundraising barbecue. **Mary Cox** has a compelling story - a story of tenacity unusual in a young woman who thought she would never go to college and dreamed of being an airline stewardess.



Born the eldest of six children in a German farming community in Nebraska, she was the “eternal babysitter.” When she was seven, Mary’s parents moved to Midland, Texas, for better weather and employment opportunities. Mary found employment in a clinical laboratory. She loved the work, the staff and the patients. “I wanted to learn everything,” she recalls. Supportive lab staff members helped her apply for scholarships and she eventually completed a laboratory technician program in a local junior college.

That wasn’t enough for this gifted and ambitious young woman. Moving to Houston, she started work on a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry at the University of Houston. After meeting and marrying Mike and moving to California, Mary completed her BS degree at San Jose State University, followed by a master’s degree at San Francisco State.

Her 35-year career as a clinical scientist started as a laboratory job and progressed to the highest management at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

Mary’s extraordinary journey in pursuit of education commits her to helping young girls and women in their struggle for the same goal. She greatly appreciates the college experience and is inspired by AAUW’s drive to support women as they seek higher educational opportunities.

After moving to Morgan Hill, Mary decided to join AAUW for its excellent book group and found more in the organization than she anticipated. “The work supporting education and equality for women and the personal interest groups were a perfect match with what I liked to do in my spare time.”

*Peggy Thompson*