



AAUW some

NEWS

News & Views from the West Chester – Chester County PA Branch

wccc-pa.aauw.net

Volume 65 Number 7 March 2020

AAUW West Chester-Chester County Branch

Girl Gov

Presented by Maeve Kelly

Communications and Program Associate /GAB Coordinator

for Chester County Fund for Women and Girls (CCFWG)

Wednesday, March 11, 7:00 p.m.

Grove Methodist Church

Chester County Fund for Women and Girls has begun a new program for young women focusing on civic education and government.

Refreshments: The Stitchers, TIG, Bridge, Mah Jongg

Directions to Grove United Methodist Church, 490 West Boot Road, West Chester, PA 19380: From West Chester, take Route 100 North to Boot Road, turn left, and go toward the intersection of Boot Road and Whitford Road. The church is on the left before you reach the intersection. Find additional direction information at www.grovechurch.org or 610-696-2663.

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Letter from the President

Hard to believe that we are three months into the New Year, and with that comes time for us to start planning our 2020-2021 fiscal year. Now is the time to reflect on our past to prepare for our upcoming 60th Anniversary Reception on March 29, and to plan for the future of our branch. We are excited to announce that final plans for our 60th are being made at the Crosslands in the late afternoon where light refreshments and drinks will be served. Ann Pehle, AAUW Pennsylvania State President will be our keynote speaker for this special occasion. We hope that you can join us to commemorate this special time in our branches' history. Remember to save the date and watch your e-mails for your invitation.

Each year we are tasked to select a Gateway to Equity winner that aligns with our mission statement and directs our resources to support this cause. This past year that focus has been Community Outreach through Decade to Doorways whose ten-year plan is to prevent and end homelessness. It's a collaboration of consumers, government entities, service providers, educators, healthcare practitioners, faith communities, funders, businesses, and people from the general public aiming to effectively end homelessness.

Under Decade to Doorways we sponsored and supported four shelters, Safe Harbor of West Chester, The Chester County Domestic Violence Center, CYWA, and The Friends Association. This led to the upcoming Power Weekend on March 28 where we will need at least 20 members to step up to help with the Domestic Violence Gala, and another 8 volunteers for GETT (Girls Exploring Tomorrow's Technology) a STEM program running from 11:30 to 4.30 at Great Valley High School (Mary Smith-chair). We are only asking for a couple of hours of your time for either of these two events, but through your volunteering you will able to see firsthand how our branch is making a difference. Many of

you have signed up but we are not there yet. We need your help to make these two events a success.

Recently, an e-mail was sent to you asking for nominations for Members Making a Difference, Outstanding Member, Peg Anderson Award and a Gateway to Equity winner for the next fiscal year. Please take a moment and make your selections. On page 22 and 23 of your handbook, you will see a list of all of the past winners for all four categories. When considering the Gateway to Equity winner, think about what we have done in the past and what organization to support for the next fiscal year. If you have any proposals, we ask that you e-mail them to Carol Haaf, our branch secretary along with a short descriptive paragraph. Please include their website address and why you think this group would be a good fit for us. Send your ideas and the three award nominations no later than March 1. We will create a ballot from your entries and vote on them at the March 11 meeting.

Last but certainly not least Eva and I want to welcome all of the new members that have joined our organization. We welcome your input and any experience you may have to help us establish and complete our goals for the future.

Anne Anderko Co-President

AAUW T-Shirt Sale

Thanks to all of you who participated in the recent AAUW t-shirt sale. We ordered some extra's in sizes small, medium and large. If you missed out and still want a t-shirt, please contact Anne Anderko, <u>ananderko@msn.com</u> and make your checks out to AAUW-West Chester Branch for \$9.99.

Looking Back





At the February brunch, Carla Grot gave the "Look Back", talking about AAUW's involvement in the formation of the Chester County Women's Coalition, which eventually became the Chester County Women's Commission, which functions to this day. She also talked about the poster our branch developed for schools, "Imagine the Possibilities," which

pictured girls with microscopes and other scientific instruments to encourage them to seek professions' normally focused toward boys. These posters were developed in the 1980's prior to the STEM movement. Both projects received AAUW grants: the Coalition grant

was \$500; the poster grant, which enabled us to produce 3,000 posters was \$5,000. We shared the poster at the AAUW convention, which was well received and sought after by other branches, and even spread across the county.

Supporting Domestic Violence Center

-- Cathy Palmquist



Preparing over 1,000 invitations for the March 28th gala of the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County (DVCCC) are (from left) Barb Lathroum, Mimi Jones, Anne Anderko, Cathy Palmquist and Pat Schultz. Working together at Cathy's home for almost four hours one recent afternoon, AAUW members stuffed, labeled and sealed the invitations for DVCCC's annual gala, this year titled, "All That's Purple 2020 -Together We Can." The DVCCC is one of the four shelters for

women that our AAUW branch is supporting under the Decade to Doorways umbrella, as our Gateway to Equity recipient this year. Previously members sent out Save the Date postcards, and invitations requesting donations from businesses for the gala's auctions and raffles. Members will assist with registration, placement of table tents and decorations the day/night of the gala. Members interested in helping should contact Cathy Palmquist or Eva Kaufman, if they have not previously signed up to help.

February Donations to Safe Harbor

-- Peggy Staarman and Kim Levan

The branch collected donations for Safe Harbor during the February brunch. Safe Harbor is one of the four partners of Decade to Doorways that the branch supports through its Gateway to Equity award. Decade to Doorways seeks to prevent and end homelessness in Chester County in ten years. Safe Harbor's mission is to provide housing, food, and access to support services for homeless single women and men. As usual, our branch members were extremely generous. Tee shirts, cans of tomato sauce, bottled water, toothpaste, deodorant, and lip balm were donated. In addition, \$356 was collected to support this non-profit. The cost to provide shelter for one person is \$45 per day, so monetary donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you so very much!

We Are Our Sisters' Keepers

-- Cathy Palmquist, Toni Gorkin



Our guest speaker was Cheryl Miles, founder of the Black Women in Chester County in Action (BWCCA), which was formed in response to The Blueprint Reports put out by the Chester County Fund for Women and Girls. The reports gave a negative picture of black women in the county, but it did not address the cause of the data or how to address it. As a result black women leaders have organized to respond to and change the situation of black women in Chester County.

Cheryl gave a very personal, thoughtful and informative talk about the status of black women and what they are doing to change their situation and issues. She noted that, while we are all the same, as human beings, black women and girls experience a large disparity in our divided culture, especially in education, economics, and health. She stressed the need to build healthy, life-giving

relationships for black women and girls through mutual respect, compassion, and a sensitivity by everyone to the differences in culture, history, and personal experiences, specific examples of which she provided. (*Picture by Cathy Palmquist*)

RE-REMINDER: Power Weekend March 28-29

Ladies, if you haven't already done so, mark your calendars! The weekend of March 28th and 29th will be the AAUW Power Weekend!

GETT (Girls Exploring Tomorrow's

Technology) is **Saturday, March 28th** from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Great Valley High School in Malvern. We still need **volunteers.**

The Domestic Violence Center Gala

The center is one of the four shelters that we are supporting. The director, Dr. Dolly Wideman-Scott, has asked if we could provide volunteers to help out on the afternoon and evening of their huge annual Gala **March 28**, which raises funds that the shelter relies on each year. The SIGN-UP SHEET was sent around at the January and February meetings with specific tasks. There are still holes in the schedule; please consider volunteering for this event.

Our third event is all fun and no work: the **celebration of our 60th Anniversary as a branch.** This lovely event will be held in the late afternoon at Crosslands on **March 29th.** Please plan to attend what promises to be a wonderful affair!

Fundraising



Fill your teapot reminder Our "Fill Your Teapot" Campaign is continuing. We handed out porcelain "teapot planters" to members who attended the meetings. You are encouraged to use them to collect your loose change between now and May. At our May 13, 2020 banquet you will turn in your donation and your decorated teapot and we will have a contest for the most creative teapots. Still don't have your teapot? Contact the

Fundraising Co-chairs: Trish Alfano & Marie Knox

A special thank you to all who participated in the White Elephant Raffle fundraiser that was held at the February Brunch meeting. All of the donated items were raffled off and a total of \$192 was collected from the raffle ticket sales.

Celebration is in Full Swing: 100 Years of Suffrage



-- Fran Pierce and Barbara Lathroum The Celebration is in FULL SWING! There are so many activities going on beginning in March that you will certainly be able to find several that you will want to attend! The list of events to celebrate the

100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage contains activities as diverse as a Gallery Talk at the Brandywine River Museum for parents with babies, to a play about Lucretia Mott and a performance by the Lincoln University Choir!

If all of this makes you curious about what might be happening in other places around the country, follow this link to the National Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission – www.womensvote100.org. The National Commission has adopted the historic suffrage slogan, "Forward through the Darkness; forward into Light." The National Women's History Alliance also provides great information about events and the activities happening in each state across the nation, and about the plans of groups such as the AAUW and League of Women's Voters to celebrate the centennial. Check out www.nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org. All Chester County Reads

Since the fall, Pam Marquette, CCCLS adult program coordinator, and three members of both AAUW-WCCC and the League of Women Voters, Pam Gray, Barb Lathroum, and Fran Pierce, have been meeting to discuss the creation of a joint Centennial project. The result of these discussions is All Chester County Reads.

Our Branch will Kick Off our "All Chester County Reads" event in the FIRST WEEK OF APRIL in cooperation with the Chester County Library System and the League of Women Voters. Our goal is to help educate Chester County about the long fight for suffrage for women and all citizens of our country. The book we will be reading is *Why They Marched* by Susan Ware. A book for older elementary children and some YAs is *Rightfully Ours: How Women Won the Vote* by Kerrie Logan Hollihan.

In August and September, children's librarians and volunteers from AAUW and The League of Women Voters will lead discussions. We would like to engage all 17 County libraries in this centennial celebration. The CC Library will help with promoting the project. We need volunteers for our library outreach! If you can lead a discussion of the book at your regional branch of the Chester County Library System sometime in the fall of 2020, please contact Fran Pierce (franpierce@verizon.net) or Barb Lathroum (blathroum@gmail.com). Several branch members have already stepped up to claim their local libraries – don't be left out – volunteer for your branch right away!

Suffrage Celebration Events in West Chester area

- Sunday, March 1 11 a.m. 2 p.m. Brandywine River Museum, *First Sundays for Families*. *Free creative art activities and gallery talk by Tahira.*
- Sunday, March 8 1 p.m. Brandywine R.M., *Lincoln University Choral Performance, Premier student ensemble under the direction of Dr. Camilla Horne.*
- Sunday, March 8 2 p.m. Brandywine R.M., Under the Bonnet: Lucretia Mott. Play about a prominent Quaker woman who fought for the rights of women and African Americans.
- Friday, March 13 10:30 a.m., Brandywine R.M., Stroller Tours: Votes for Women. Guided Tour especially for adults accompanied by babies.
- Wed, March 18 3 4 p.m., West Chester University, Sykes Ballroom A. EqualiTea Speaker Series.
- Wed, March 18 6 8 p.m., Brandywine R.M., *Creative Escape: Powerful Prints.* Unwind, mingle, and make art. BYOB.
- Thurs, March 19 2 p.m., Brandywine R.M., Curator's Gallery Tour.
- Wed, March 25 6 p.m., Brandywine R.M., Gender and Race in Politics: A Conversation. Panel discussion led by Krysta Jones, co-chair of Women's Vote Centennial Initiative.
- Thurs, April 2 2 p.m., Brandywine R.M., Songs of Suffrage. Folk musicians present engaging songs of the suffrage movement.

Making a difference! Watch this space!

- Help with GETT: volunteers needed Saturday, March 28th from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 to run activities and help with providing information to parents. Contact Mary Smith.
- Gala for Domestic Violence: volunteers to help out at the Gala on the afternoon and evening of March 28. Also help is needed to prepare. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Eva Kaufmann, Cathy Palmquist, Mimi Jones, or Peggy Staarman.

• West Chester Food Cupboard:

We continue to encourage members to volunteer at the West Chester Food Cupboard at 431 S. Bolmar Street on the last Monday of each month from 6:30 to 7:30. Volunteers are needed to complete tasks like stocking shelves, bagging produce, separating large items into smaller containers, or doing whatever is needed. Our volunteer number increased a bit last month, but additional volunteers are always welcome.

Members who are interested in volunteering or who would like more information about this truly worthwhile cause should contact Jean Shervais at jshervais@verizon.net or call 610-431-9066.

• Community Warehouse Project of Chester County (CWP)

Founded by the Rotary Club of West Chester, this 501c3 organization's mission, "Helping Us Turn Empty Houses into Homes" works with individuals and/or families coming out of a shelter program, suffering from poverty or other hardship who are unable to afford new or used furniture. CWP collects and redistributes donated furniture and household items to needy folks in the county. The CWP is located in Downingtown, and drop-off day is the 3rd Saturday of each month. Another location has opened up for drop-off in West Chester. For further information about donating items or funds, directions to CWP or volunteering, call 484-473-4360. To have someone come to your home and advise you on items, contact Jeannie McGinn, 484-343-4577. NOTE: Bed frames are always needed.

AAUW 2020 Awards Nominations

An email has gone out asking you to nominate members for the following 2020 Awards:

- Member Making a Difference
- Outstanding Branch Member
- Peg Anderson Award
- Gateway to Equity Award

Recent recipients and qualifications for the awards are outlined in the email and in the Handbook. Reply to Carol Haaf's email by March 1 for voting at the March 11 meeting.

Membership News: March 19 PMP Close to 100 Members!

Our March PMP will be held on Thursday, March 19, at the home of Pat Schultz. We are at 94 members ... only 6 members short of our goal of 100. Think about finding only a half dozen prospective members and bring them to the March PMP!

We hope that each of you will talk to your friends about our branch. Bring someone to a meeting as a guest & let them meet our group. Invite a friend to attend a special interest group with you, it's a more intimate way to get to know us. Feel free to contact either of us with any questions.

Patricia:610-436-9752 <u>pls@patriciaschultz.com</u> Susan:610-431-4278 whimziecieux@gmail.com

Leslie Wachob Passes

Leslie Wachob, who was our AAUW president from 2007-2009, and named an Outstanding Branch Member in 2010, passed away on February 9. She was active in many AAUW activities, most notably in FIG, which she and her husband often hosted, featuring Cajun dishes they shared from the many years they lived in New Orleans, Louisiana. We were sad to see them move to Palm Springs a few years ago to be nearer to their son. They celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary in January. Leslie is survived by her husband George and their son, Bob. As Leslie wanted, there will be no funeral or memorial service.



Member News and NotesassesAUW Member Carolyn ComittaAUW presidentHonored



-- Cathy Palmquist State Representative and AAUW member Carolyn Comitta was honored by the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce as its 2019 Outstanding Citizen of the Year at the Chamber's 2020 Annual Banquet in February at The Desmond Hotel. In the "Chamber Chatter"

newsletter article, "2019 Outstanding Citizen Brings Knowledge, Energy and Enthusiasm." Carolyn's work in Harrisburg, the local community, and internationally, were cited. After serving on West Chester Borough Council, she was elected Mayor for two terms. In Harrisburg she serves on the PA House of Representatives Committees: Aging and Older Adult Services, Environmental Resources & Energy, and Appropriations. She was appointed to the PA Commission for Women by Governor (continued on next page)

Comitta (continued)

Wolf, and to the PA Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control & Conservation Committee. A long-term environmental champion, she is vice-chair of the PA Climate Caucus, is committed to common-sense gun violence prevention, combating the drug epidemic and seeing that schools receive fair share funding. She is well known locally for her "Community Conversations" throughout the county. She has long been involved in several United Nations Conferences, and is vice president and chief financial officer of Thomas Comitta Associates, the town planning and landscape architecture firm founded by her husband, Tom. In the chamber write-up, there was mention of her membership in community organizations, which listed the American Association of University Women! Congratulations to our friend and AAUW member, Carolyn Comitta!

AAUW Mission Statement: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Our Chapter – 2019-2020:

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Dialen website	weee palada w.net

Newsletter

The newsletter is published by the first of each month. The deadline for submissions is the 10th of the month. Please send emails to tgorkin@comcast.net. Thank you to everyone who contributes to these issues; it can't be done without you! -- *Toni Gorkin*

Facebook Page

Don't forget to check our Facebook Page. It's **AAUW Chester County PA**. Thank you to Alice Lenthe for getting it up and running.

Chapter Web Page

Thank you to Sandy Alexander for updating the chapter Web Page at <u>https://wccc-pa.aauw.net/</u>. NOTE: Be sure to share your photos with Sandy to keep the content fresh and inviting!

Trifold Brochure

The trifold brochure that describes our chapter has been updated and has been printed. It's a good tool to use when exploring interest with potential new members.

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at Board members' homes. The next board meeting will be WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020, at the home of Mimi Jones, at 7:00 p.m. All members are welcome to attend Board meetings.



2020 AAUW PA State Convention . . . more than half-way there

If you haven't registered for the AAUW Convention yet...you need to hurry up...you'll want to lock in the lower convention rate before March 15th when the rate increases...so to get you to help us

reach our goal of 100 for the 100th...here's some information on the Convention program...

The Convention will be held April 24-26, 2020 at The Central Hotel and Conference Center in Harrisburg. A block of rooms as been set aside for AAUW. . . mention this when you make your reservations. Room rate is \$119.95 plus tax for single or double rooms. Registration costs for the Convention are: \$145 for the full conference (all three days), \$120 for Friday and Saturday, and \$110 for Saturday only. On Friday evening the speaker will be Elaine Weiss, author of "The Women's Hour."

Special Interest Groups

Women's Social Bridge

The AAUW Chester County-West Chester



Branch Women's Social Bridge meets once a month at 1 pm for two to three hours of friendly bridge. We play contract bridge

and change partners after 6 hands. We meet at a member's home; locations are sent in e-mail reminders each month. All are welcome! To have your name added to the e-mail list, contact Sandy Alexander at

frau.salexander@gmail.com.

The dates for 2019-2020 are:

March 20 April 17 May 15 June 19 July 17

Couples Bridge

A chair is needed. Please contact one of the presidents if interested.

Mah Jongg

Have you heard about Mah Jongg and are wondering what it is all about? Would you like to learn to play this game? Mah Jongg is similar to the card game rummy but is played with tiles instead of cards. You pick and discard tiles and try to complete pre-determined combinations of 14 tiles that are published on the National Mah Jongg League card. At an introductory session on Monday, February 24 at Sandy Alexander's home, Sandy and Donna Eaves introduced the tiles used to play the game and familiarized participants with the National Mah Jongg League card. Please contact Sandy at

<u>frau.salexander@gmail.com</u> if you are interested but couldn't make it February 24th, to let Sandy and Donna know what days/times would work better for you.

FIG (Food Interest Group)

This group dines around either at a member's home or at a local restaurant. The group usually meets on a Saturday or Sunday for brunch or dinner on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Couples (unless otherwise specified) and singles, as well as new members, are welcome.

Next events: Sunday, March 22, 5:00 pm – A

St. Patrick's Day Dinner, hosted by Mimi and Dan Jones.

Sunday, May 17, 5:00 - A Comfort Food Dinner, hosted by Phyllis and Dan Dunn.

Invitations with all details will be emailed to FIG members about one month before the event. Please wait for your invitation to RSVP. For more information or to get on the mailing list, contact Donna Eaves, FIG chair, at 610-692-5277 or deaves@live.com.

Book Groups:

AAUW branches are known for their book groups, and membership in a group often encourages continuing membership. The West Chester-Chester County Branch currently has two book discussion groups meeting in the day and in the evening at different times of the month.

LIT I: Daytime Literature Group

Fiction & Nonfiction Lit I Book Group meets at 1:00 pm on the third Monday of the month. On **March 16** the group will meet at the home of Kay Philipps (note change in location) to read *Grandma Gatewood's Walk*, by Ben Montgomery. Any questions? Contact Janet Kane:

jfentonkane@gmail.com or 610-399-1149.

LIT II: Evening Literature Fiction & Nonfiction Book Group

Lit Group II will meet on Wednesday, March 18 at 7:00 PM to discuss *Educated* by Tara Westover. Our hostess this month is Mimi Jones (danandmini1@verizon.net). If you are not already receiving emails from Lit Group II, please let Jean Speiser (JeanSp@gmail.com) know that you are interested so that you can be informed of any schedule changes or modifications.

Great Decisions

We work with a book produced by the Foreign Policy Association called *Great Decisions* (cost \$30). It contains 8 topics and questions for discussion. Some topics this year include China's geopolitics, Turkey, and Global Health Issues. One person leads and all look for additional material. We meet at the West Chester Diner at 2:00 pm and generally spend approx. 2 hours. The first half hour is social. We usually meet on the second Monday in the month, but since we are a very small group we can be flexible. We would welcome new members. For information contact Jacky Page at 610-359-9887 or jacquelinepage9@gmail.com

TIG (Travel Interest Group)

The Travel Interest Group is composed of members and their guests who like to go to interesting places and often enjoy a meal together before or after. We usually do something 7 or 8 times a year. Please contact Sandy Alexander

(<u>frau.salexander@gmail.com</u>), Mary Marco (<u>Mary.m.marco@gmail.com</u>), or Jane McDowell (<u>jlmcdowell@gmail.com</u>) if you want to be on the list for future events. Being on the list does not obligate you to attend any trips. Anyone is welcome to coordinate an event or trip they are interested in.

Stitchers Group

The "Stitchers" meet the first Friday of each month at 10:00 AM. On March 6, we're meeting at the home of Pat Schultz, at 235 Chatham Way West Chester. We bring our stitching projects to work on as we chat. We welcome your skills, whatever they may be. Please join us, it's an enjoyable morning. Watch your email for a reminder.

Walkers Group

The group meets on Tuesdays at the Trestle Bridge Trail (officially the Brandywine Meadows Trail) off Rt. 322 near Downingtown. Parking is in the lot near the Trestle Bridge. They leave promptly at 9 A.M. You can walk as fast and as far as you would like. Expect lots of talking and laughter. No emails will go out; just show up and be ready to shove off at 9:00 A.M.Contact Phyllis Dunn at <u>dunn.phyllis@gmail.com</u> to be added to the email contact list.



119 Llandovery Drive, Exton, PA 19341. March 2020 Newsletter Girl Gov wccc-pa.aauw.net

AAUW Mission Statement

The AAUW advances equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. AAUW Vision Statement

AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy,

and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

AAUW West Chester - Chester County Branch Vision Statement

The West Chester-Chester County Branch will

- Actively recruit members who support Association goals.
- Nurture these members through active Interest Groups, through monthly meetings with intellectual and social merit, and through member support.
- Sponsor at least one project per year with volunteers and with funds to promote Association and branch goals.
 - Sponsor at least one local scholarship per year for a nontraditional student
 - Support programs for training and self-development of branch members to promote Association goals.
 - Raise funds through community projects and member gifts to support Association goals.

Since its first meeting in 1881, AAUW has been a catalyst for change. Today, with more than 100,000 members, 1,000 branches, and 500 college and university partners, AAUW contributes to a more promising future and provides a powerful voice for women and girls—a voice that cannot and will not be ignored. www.aauw.org www.aauwpa.org wccc-pa.aauw.net