



AAUWsome NEWS

News & Views from the
West Chester – Chester County
PA Branch
wccc-pa.aauw.net

Volume 70 Number 4
December 2024



HOLIDAY PARTY FOR MEMBERS AND GUESTS



Sunday, December 8th, 3-5:30 PM

Ellerslie Farmhouse**

At Crosslands, Kennett Square

Cost: \$10.00 per person

MENU: Bring an appetizer to share for 10-12 people.

Desserts will be provided by the Board.

*Out of consideration for those with allergies/dietary restrictions,
please label all food with list of main ingredients & your name in case of a question.*

Wine, coffee, tea and water will be available.

GIFTS: We are collecting grocery gift cards
to benefit the Maternal & Child Health Consortium.

Cash donations are also welcome

****DIRECTIONS to Ellerslie:** [Crosslands 1660 East Street Rd Kennett Square, PA 19348]

From WC take 202 South. Turn West on Rte. 926. Go approximately 6 miles. Turn left into Crosslands. Take first left. Turn into parking lot 9. Go up hill and Ellerslie is the brick farmhouse at the top of the hill.

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Letter from the Presidents

*"A friend may be waiting behind a stranger's face."
—Maya Angelou*

It was wonderful to see 45 of you at our November branch meeting. **What a turnout!** Please remember to join us for the last event of the year, the **Holiday Party** on December 8th. Our January meeting is on Zoom so hopefully if you are not able to join us in December we will see you online.

Please welcome the seven women who joined us in November. Find out more about them in the newsletter. And add the addendum that was sent via email to your handbook. Many thanks to Susan Woron Beardsley and Anne Anderko for preparing a wonderful PowerPoint presentation describing the various activities within the West Chester-Chester County affiliate. What a wonderful way to advertise who we are! Speaking of advertising, remember to send pictures for publication on Facebook to Sandy Alexander, the website to Rhoda McNitt and the newsletter to Toni Gorkin.

Fundraising is an important component of how/who we can help in the community. These past few months have seen several fundraisers; BINGO night, Boscov pass, Pecan Sale, and the monthly meeting raffle. Thank you to all who contributed. However, the fundraisers need to be planned and implemented. This requires a committee, not a single person. Kim Glavin, the Chair of Fundraising, has been phenomenal but cannot do it alone. She needs your help! Plus, she will be leaving this role at the end of June, so now is your chance to learn from the best. And work with her to plan future fundraisers. Please consider this important role and reach out to Kim.

Thank you for supporting and giving to Maternal and Child Health Consortium each month. If you

have the time and inclination, please consider helping at their Holiday Party on December 19th. Set up is 2-4 pm with the party starting at 4:30 PM and ending at 8:00 PM. Clearances are necessary and information can be found at their website and below in this newsletter.

The recent election reminds us to examine our role as members of AAUW. We are nonpartisan; however, that doesn't mean we back down from our position that all women and girls deserve the right to have our bodies respected, our women's work should be valued, and our education and workplaces should be inclusive and free from violence, discrimination, harassment and bias. Our work can take place on the federal, state or local level. AAUW Pennsylvania has a very active Public Policy committee. The committee is constantly monitoring legislature and bills that impact women and girls. Gains made on the state level impact our county, our community. Please consider being on **our LAPP committee** to help us learn about state issues and help to get the word out on how members can help.

Together women are powerful; we support one another, offering hope, guidance and strength. Stay connected to this community, bring suggestions or ideas on how we can advance the mission of AAUW. Your involvement is key to helping **WCCC AAUW** move forward as we face the upcoming battles impacting women and girls. Our strength as women comes from our compassion, dedication, purpose to come together as a community supporting each other while supporting those women and girls in need.

May your holiday season be full of joy, hope and love.

*Nancy Paist-Riches and Beryl Goldman
Co-Presidents WCCC AAUW*

January Meeting: Wednesday, January 8th, 2025
7:00 p.m. - Zoom Meeting
**"Women Empowered: A Transformational Journey
to Higher Education and AAUW"**
Speaker: Chinoweso Tinago-Shamaki



Maternal and Child Health Consortium (MCHC)

-- Suzy DeGeorge and Arlene Cohen

A Carload of toys for MCHC!

Toys donated by AAUW members filled the car! Don't forget grocery store gift cards for December.

Open House December 9

MCHC is having a free, open house networking event with breakfast at their West Chester location on Monday, December 9th, 2024 at 9:30 am. No cost and it's pretty informal. It'd be great to have you if you're interested in attending. Here's the [Facebook link](#) for details. Please consider visiting the organization to learn more about them.



Volunteers for Annual Holiday Party

MCHC is looking for volunteers to help with their annual holiday party scheduled for December 19 from 4:00-8:00 pm. Volunteers will direct attendees, help with the food/snacks table, registration, craft table and distribute gifts to families. Volunteers who work directly with MCHC families require clearances as described below (text and links taken directly from the MCHC Volunteer web page):

Volunteers must provide the following clearances prior to volunteering with MCHC. Clearances may take several weeks to process.

- [PA Child Abuse Certification >](#)
- [FBI Criminal History Background Check >](#)
- [Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Record Check >](#)



Please contact Arlene Cohen (arlene.cohen@verizon.net, 610-547-8380) or Suzy DeGeorge (suzydegeorge@yahoo.com) if you would like to volunteer or if you have any questions. Thank you for your continued support of MCHC!

Laundromat Library League Challenge on WHYY-TV December 6

-- Arlene Rengert

On Friday Dec. 6, from 6-10:30 p.m., WHYY TV (Channel 12) will broadcast a challenge that will secure \$10,000 donated to the LLL if a yet undecided number of pledges or donations are received during those hours. And, for every pledge or donation received then they (the station) will contribute toward the purchase of a children's book to be distributed by the LLL. (The required number of donations is still being determined but it should be achievable.)

Fund Raising

-- Kim Glavin

Pecan & Cashew Sale Thanks to the entire AAUW community for your tremendous participation in our recent pecan fundraiser. Your enthusiasm and support have made this event a great success raising over \$1,600.00 for our affiliate. There are still 4 packages of Monmouth pecans and 2 Jumbo cashews available for sale.

Membership News

Susan Woron, Anne Anderko, Membership Co-Vice Presidents

Susan and I are both very excited about the results from our recent Prospective Members Party (PMP) that was held on October 24 at Hershey's Mill. To date, we have signed up seven new members! Please welcome Beth Barber, Christine Batchelor, Lee Dibble, Caryle Glah, Kate Lindsay, Judy Saunders, and Kathy Ward. Five of the new members were from the PMP and two others came from outside recruiting efforts. In this newsletter and in coming months, we will include short bios to help you get to know our newest members. Susan and I are not done yet! We still have other people who have shown interest and one who plans to join once she returns from vacation. In addition, some of our new Hershey Mill members are telling their neighbors about our organization and encouraging them to join too. This event turned out to be a super recruiting event!



New members who attended the November meeting: Caryle Glah, Kate Lindsay, Judy Saunders. Beth Barber

You can help us grow our organization by bringing your friends to our events and meetings, spreading the word about all the services we provide to our community, and how enjoyable it is to belong to a truly remarkable group of women who work together effortlessly and get things done. As always, we encourage you to help us recruit new members and thank you for your support.

Cheryl Brubaker

Please welcome one of our new members, Cheryl Brubaker, who oversees The Fund for Women and Girls. Prior to joining The Fund, Cheryl Brubaker served as Executive Director of the Women's Resource Center. She brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to advancing gender equity. With over 7 years in nonprofit leadership at the Women's Resource Center, she has a proven track record of driving impactful initiatives and fostering sustainable growth.

Cheryl Brubaker has over 25 years of non-profit experience, including executive administration, fund development, programming, communications and marketing. She has held leadership positions with Women Against Abuse in Philadelphia, Norristown's Victim Services Center, the Sellersville Theater, and the YMCA of Bucks County. She completed her Master's Degree in Nonprofit Management at Eastern University. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia.

Caryle Glah

Please welcome Caryle Glah. Caryle was raised in West Chester with her twelve siblings. She is one of the older kids in the family. She graduated from Bishop Shanahan High School. She married and had four children, three sons and one daughter. She was a stay-at-home mom until her youngest child was ten and she decided to go to college at West Chester University. After graduating with a degree in elementary education, she taught kindergarten and went on to get a M.Ed. After a couple years, she decided to change careers and studied at WCU for an MSW. She worked in the Nephrology Division at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia as the kidney transplant social worker until she retired. She has always been physically active and when she turned 50, she began competing in triathlons and continues to train and compete. About 18 months ago, she began volunteering at the Chester County Community Warehouse Project. She loves adventurous traveling. Her daughter and family live in Vermont and her sons and families live nearby. She has eight fabulous grandchildren.

November Meeting: Thistle Hills

Speaker Carol Hart Metzker used poignant props – shoes from a theoretical victim of human trafficking, “Anna” – to demonstrate the typical path from childhood trauma to being trafficked. She also showed the potential transformation of victims to positive self-image and better life path through the intervention at the Thistle Hills facility.



Carol Metzker uses a child's boot to example a girl at risk of trauma that leads to trafficking.

years such girls in turmoil turn to drugs to self-medicate and may become addicted. They are looking for love, a need which a trafficker preys upon, as a “Romeo.” A girl who is addicted and sold cannot really consent to sex, Ms. Metzger points out. And the life she leads is in reality not at all the “glamorous” myth.

Thistle Hills is Chester County's only residential program specifically designed for women survivors of human trafficking. For two years it provides for each of two residents a safe home. It not only provides heat, light, safety -- but even more important, a family-like place to feel loved, build self-esteem, get mental and medical health, learn communication, and develop positive life skills. Close to transportation and community resources, residents can start to get schooling and jobs.

Although it can serve few women at a time, Ms. Metzger pointed out that Thistle Hills is part of an extended community of resources in the region that provide support to victims of trafficking.

Ms. Metzker explained what the facts (versus myths) are behind how girls end up trafficked. The story starts as early as age 4-7, with some kind of exploitation or trauma in the home. In school, such a child often displays disruptive behavior, may be branded a “troublemaker” for acting out, and self-esteem deteriorates. In teen

Warehouse Project Monthly Volunteer Program

-- Anne Anderko - Chair



Karen Marshall and Jean Shervais

On November 20th, Karen Marshall and Jean Shervais volunteered their time at the Warehouse. Little did they know that they would be making holiday favors for an upcoming Warehouse event. We got very adept using our glue guns and finished the project in the time allotted.

Please contact me, ananderko@msn.com if you are interested in volunteering in the new year. Again, we meet the third Wednesday of each month from 10:00 to 12:00. If you haven't had a chance to volunteer, seeing this organization in action will give you an excellent picture of what they do.

Lastly, when you are putting away all the holiday decorations and reorganizing in the new year, think about those gently used household items that you no longer use and pass them along. You can bring them to a meeting or drop them off at my house and I will be glad to get them to the warehouse. Thanks for your continued support.

CALLING ALL BRIDGE PLAYERS!



In the past, our special interest groups included a social bridge opportunity. Due to members moving away, the numbers dwindled such that it was hard to pull a group together. Now that we have so many new members, it may be time to revitalize the group. If you are interested in playing social bridge once a month, please contact **Janet Kane** (jfentonkane@gmail.com). The day and time will be determined based on the input from interested members. This has always been a friendly, low-stress game and is open to all levels of players.

TIG Visits Escherick Studio, Plans Outing to Hagley Museum

Members of the AAUW travel interest group met for lunch at Nudy's in Malvern on Friday, Nov. 8 followed by a visit to the Wharton Escherick studio and museum. Escherick was recognized by his peers as the Dean of American craftsmen and sought to apply techniques of sculpture to everyday items, working primarily in wood. His talents and contributions are further being recognized with a special exhibition at the Brandywine Museum of Art through January 19. Our group was especially fortunate to have a guide who was herself a master woodworker.

Hagley Museum

The next TIG outing is planned for December 10th with a holiday tour of the Hagley Museum and Eleutherian Mills. Join us to encounter the holiday decorations and traditions of multiple generations of the du Pont family.

Due to increased demand at this time of year, the following TIG trip is limited to eight (8) participants. If interested, please email Jane McDowell at jlwmcowell@gmail.com or text 610-574-3463. Your prompt reply would be greatly appreciated.

Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 10:00 am

Hagley Museum, 200 Hayley Creek Road, Wilmington, DE 19087

\$20, \$16 for seniors (payable at door)

Lunch at 12:30ish - Pizzas by Elizabeth, 3801 Kenneth Pike, Wilmington, DE 19087



West Chester Food Cupboard

-- Jean Shervais

AAUW has been volunteering at the West Chester Food Cupboard for several years. On the last Monday of the month at 7 p.m., we meet for an hour to complete tasks that have not been done by the day volunteers. These can include stocking shelves, checking for expired dates, and repackaging smaller amounts of larger items. Any AAUW member who is interested in volunteering should contact Jean Shervais at jshervais@verizon.net. The Food Cupboard is located at 431 S. Bolmar Street in West Chester.

Criteria for Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Grant Applications Clarified

The Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Grant was established in memory of Harriet Jarosh, a long-time member and leader of the West Chester-Chester County affiliate of AAUW. She was passionate about supporting and preserving the environment. Upon her death, her family made a contribution to the affiliate, and it was decided to utilize the funds to support environmental education projects. AAUW West Chester-Chester County has received additional generous support from its members and the fund is now invested so that it can remain viable in perpetuity. Each year, the AAUW West Chester-Chester County board of officers makes a determination as to which project(s) should be supported. Current grants range from \$250 - \$500 per year.

Based on recent discussion, the Board has clarified the requirements for applying for a grant, and the Affiliate website has been updated.

Requests for funds must meet the following requirements:

- Project must focus on efforts toward increasing awareness and understanding of current environmental issues.
- Project must be conducted in Chester County.
- Project must provide for maximum inclusivity and accessibility.
- Requested funds may not be used to pay salaries.
- Recognize the support of AAUW in project materials

Applicants for grants must submit a one-page description of the project, addressing the criteria listed above, to: Nancy Dore (ncdore@gmail.com) by February 1 of the year in which funds are requested.

Great Decisions Discussion Group sets new topics for 2025

-- Robbe Healey

The Great Decisions Discussion Group has outlined a new set of topics for discussion during 2025. See the list of topics under "Special Interest Groups" item below. The group uses the *Foreign Policy Associations Great Decisions Briefing Book*, which offers a

structure for foreign policy discussions on urgent and contemporary topics. The group meets from 1:00-3:00 pm on the 4th Monday of the month in West Chester at the home of member Robbe Healey.

Member Notes

Toni Gorkin Achieves 1000 hours - Toni was "pinned" with a bronze frog pin for reaching the milestone of 1,000 volunteer hours at the Pennsylvania Master Naturalist Annual Meeting November 8-10. The hours were worked at the Heart of Uwchlan native plant pollinator garden project in Exton and at Longwood Gardens over the last five years.

AAUW Mission Statement:
**To advance gender equity for women and girls through research,
education, and advocacy.**
Our Chapter – 2024-2025:

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<i>Jean Shervais*</i> 610-431-9066	Co-Vice President for Program jshervais@verizon.net
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<i>Anne Anderko</i> 484-885-4943	Membership Co-Vice President ananderko@msn.com
<i>Chris Smith*</i> 856-217-7171	Recording Secretary CmcSmith1972@gmail.com
<i>Robin Paragone</i> 484-844-2161	Corresponding Secretary rparagone905@gmail.com
<i>Jane Schultz</i> 484-467-6835	Financial Officer mjschultz46@gmail.com
<i>Branch Website</i>	wccc-pa.aauw.net

*newly elected

Board Meeting

Board Meetings are 7 – 9 PM, first THURSDAY of the Month [unless otherwise noted]. The Board Meetings will be via ZOOM [unless otherwise noted]. There is no meeting in December. The January meeting will be a ZOOM meeting held on January 8th at 6:30 p.m., prior to the Affiliate Program meeting.

Social Media

-- Sandy Alexander

Let me introduce our branch's new Facebook Page: West Chester-Chester County AAUW! I will be creating events for our speakers as well as any event open to guests. I'd also like to post pictures showing people having fun at social activities, so Special Interest Chairpersons, please take pictures and send them my way (fb4aauw@gmail.com)! I will be expanding our digital presence by posting on Nextdoor and West Chester Patch as well.

How can you help our Branch get noticed?

1. If you are on Facebook, go to <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61563134861603> and Follow and/or Like the page. Look for the "Events" and mark yourself as "Going" or "Interested" – that will make our event pop up in feeds of your FB friends.
2. Send links and/or information for events or articles of other organizations that would be of interest to our members. The more active our page is, the more likely it is to get noticed.

Thanks in advance for your help to put our branch on the digital map!

Newsletter

The newsletter is published by the first of each month. The **deadline for submissions is the 10th of the month** to ensure the issue can be distributed on the first of the next month. Please send emails to tgorkin@gmail.com.

Finance Officer's Report

Beginning Checking Account Balance July 1, 2024	\$8,098.17
Ending Checking Account Balance October 31, 2024	\$9,869.83
Vanguard Account September 30, 2024 <i>(Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Fund)</i>	\$15,355.64
Chester County Community Foundation September 30, 2024 <i>(Alice Lawson Scholarship Fund)</i>	\$291776.12
Mimi Jones Scholarship Fund <i>(dedicated line item within the checking account)</i>	\$2,056.00
	YTD
	July 1, 2024 – October 31, 2024
TOTAL Income	\$9,394.50
TOTAL Disbursements	\$7,622.84
NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$1,771.66



Special Interest Groups



Women's Social Bridge

A coordinator is needed. See article above.
Contact **Janet Kane**.

Couples Bridge

A chair is needed.

Mah Jongg

Pat Schultz is coordinating Mah Jongg. We meet on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays at various homes starting at 1:00 PM. We usually play around 2 hours. We play with new and seasoned players. Pat sends an email reminder to our players about

three days to a week in advance. For more information contact Pat Schultz at 610-322-0514.

TIG (Travel Interest Group)

Contact Mary Marco at mary.m.marco@gmail.com or Jane McDowell at Jlwmcdowell@gmail.com. See article above about visit to Wharton Escherick Museum in November and visit to Hagley Museum in December.

FIG (Food Interest Group)

Food Interest Group (FIG) explores new foods through thematically planned potlucks at member's homes or at local restaurants. The group meets on weekends for either brunch or dinner. Partners and singles are usually welcome. Invitations will be sent to FIG members, but attendance is open to all affiliate members. Contact Donna Eaves, deaves@live.com, to be added to the mailing list.

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.

LIT I: Daytime Literature Group

Fiction & Nonfiction Lit I Book Group will meet at 1:00 pm on the third Monday of the month.

The group will not meet in December. They will meet January 20 at the home of Kay Philipps to read *The Frozen River*, by Ariel Lawhon. Carla Grot will lead the discussion. Contact: Janet Kane 610-742-5961 - jfentonkane@gmail.com

LIT II: Literature Fiction & Nonfiction Book Group – **Note Meeting Day/Time Change**

We are now meeting in the afternoon, so we welcome anyone who prefers daytime driving to the evening. We meet on the second Thursday of each month at 2:00. However, we will not meet in December.



Global Issues affect all of our lives. The Foreign Policy Association's Great Decisions Briefing Book offers a structure for foreign

policy discussions on urgent and contemporary topics. We meet from **1:00-3:00 pm on the 4th Monday of the month** in West Chester at the home of member Robbe Healey. We welcome you to join in these lively and thoughtful discussions.

The eight topics in the Foreign Policy Association Great Decisions 2025 Briefing Book are:

Great Decisions 2025 Discussion Group!

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday, January 9th at 2:00 pm at Phyllis Dunn's home**. Chris Smith will lead the discussion about *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin. Please let Phyllis (dunn.phyllis@gmail.com) and Peggy Staarman (peggstaar@verizon.net) know if you will attend.

Walkers Group

The group meets every Tuesday at 9:00 am at the Trestle Bridge parking lot...or officially the Brandywine Meadows Trail...off Rt. 322 near Downingtown from January thru May, and from June through December they meet at the Sugarsbridge parking lot off route 322 nearer to West Chester. They leave promptly at 9 am. Walk as fast and as far as you would like. Lots of talking & laughter! No other emails will be sent out to remind anyone...just show up and be ready to shove off at 9am on Tuesdays. They don't walk in the rain or snow...drizzle YES...snow & rain NO!

Contact: Phyllis Dunn at dunn.phyllis@gmail.com

1. American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads
2. U.S. Changing Leadership of the World Economy
3. U.S.-China Relations
4. International Cooperation on Climate Change (CONTINUED on next page)
5. The Future of NATO and European Security
6. AI and American National Security
7. India: Between China, the West, and the Global South
8. After Gaza: American Policy in the Middle East

To learn more about the Foreign Policy Association, or to read a brief summary of the topics above, visit: https://www.fpa.org/great_decisions/index.cfm?act=show_material&product_id=16892

Interested: Email Robbe Healey @ Robbe.Healey@gmail.com



West Chester - Chester County Chapter
119 Llandoverly Drive, Exton, PA 19341.

December 2024 Newsletter

Holiday Party

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