



October Meeting: Wednesday, October 15th, 6:30 p.m.



Citizen Advocacy
Christine Brown, Program Coordinator for
Citizen Advocacy

“The mission of Citizen Advocacy of Chester County is to initiate and support a variety of intentional relationships that provide advocacy for opportunity, protection from harm, sponsorship into community life, friendship, and justice for isolated people living with a disability. Citizen Advocacy is built upon a belief in the power and competence of the ordinary citizen to care for and connect to others and to make a lifelong commitment to stand by, stand for and stand with another person, through good times as well as challenging ones.”

Grove Methodist Church

Arrive at 6:30-7:00PM for Social Time / 7:00PM Speaker / ~7:40PM Meeting
Refreshments & Setup/Cleanup: provided by Lit I

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 Presidents

-- Beryl Goldman, Rhoda McNitt

A woman's health is her capital.
~ Harriet Beecher Stowe

October is known for many very important holidays and priorities such as Halloween, World Mental Health Day and, of course, the sweetest of all, Homemade Cookie Day (October 1). October is also national Breast Cancer Awareness Month. As members of AAUW West Chester-Chester County, we promote and act upon giving back to our communities, especially to the women and children who live within. However, without attention to our own personal health and well-being, our purpose would not be possible.

We have come a long way in early detection of breast cancer and have expanded the toolbox of interventions. Breast cancer is no longer doom and gloom since each woman's treatment plan is individualized, specific to their own needs and desires. Each woman is now part of the treatment team, not simply a number or non-entity. It was about 12 years ago that my daughter-in-law and I (Beryl) walked 60 miles over three days for the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Such an eye-opener to realize how much this condition has affected, and continues to affect, so many lives. Also, it's not just women but, to a lesser degree, men, who deal with breast cancer themselves.

Yet, unfortunately, the present administration does not seem to acknowledge and respect the lives of people dealing with this dreaded disease today and into the future, as noted by its reduced support of cancer research and treatment. Just in the first three months of 2025, compared to the same period in 2024, the administration cut funding of cancer research by 31%. The National Cancer Institute lost

more than \$300 million dollars in the first quarter of this year compared to 2024.

We are strong women who need to encourage, no, more than that, demand, that our legislators take control of this situation and not allow research and advances in breast cancer treatment to be ignored and underfunded. We are strong, female-leaders with the strength, perseverance, and determination to keep this incredibly important issue in the forefront of their minds and pocketbooks. This is not a partisan issue, it is a woman's issue that impacts the lives of not only each woman but also their families, their communities and the country.

I'm interested in women's health because I'm a woman. I'd be a darn fool not to be on my own side.

■ Maya Angelou

We look forward to seeing you on **Wednesday, October 15th at 6:30 pm** at the Grove Methodist Church. Our speaker that evening will be Christine Brown, Program Coordinator for Citizen Advocacy. She will speak about how this organization provides protection, assistance, friendship and justice for people living with disabilities.

Have a Boo-tiful Fall!

Beryl & Rhoda

Looking Ahead: Mark Your Calendars for Annual Holiday Party!!

From Brenda Hunsberger:

Members-please mark your calendars for Sunday, December 7. That's the date of our annual Holiday party at Ellerslie Farmhouse at Crosslands, Kennett Square. Time is 3-5:30, and both Members and guests are invited. More details to follow soon!

If you have any questions, or need anything else, please let me know.

West Chester/Chester County Affiliate Celebrates 65 Years

-- Toni Gorkin



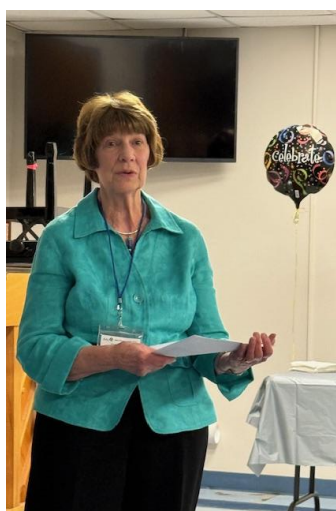
Over delicious cake, members gathered to hear about the 65 years of the affiliate's many activities to support and enhance equity and opportunity for women and girls.



First, Karen Wellin, PA AAUW Membership VP, set our affiliate's history in the framework of the history of the state and national organization. Karen noted that the membership dues for students -- \$18.81 -- reflects the founding date of 1881, with the idea to encourage women in higher education and career development. She cited several early studies, including one in 1885 that showed that college does not impair a woman's fertility! She cited famous members from Marie Curie up and through astronaut Judith Resnick. She noted some of the advocacy efforts, i.e., to get the Equal Pay Act passed in 1963, Title IX in 1972, Family and Medical Leave in 1993, and the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2008. She named several important members who became deans of universities, and cited Representative Shirley Chisholm, first black congresswoman.



Karen Wellin, PA AAUW Membership VP



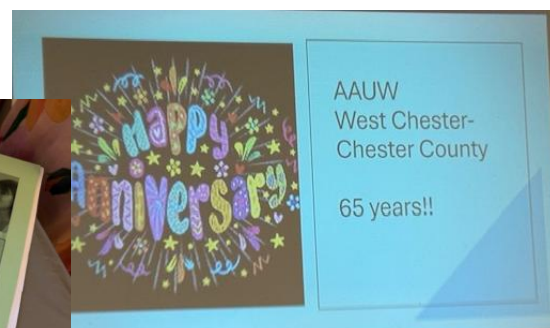
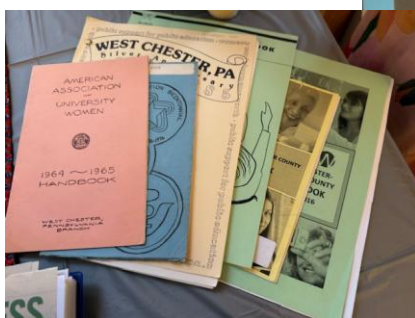
Donna Eaves

Our chapter historian, Donna Eaves, then presented a slide program of key moments in West Chester/Chester County's 65 years. Donna had also laid out a splendid display of historic documents (see pictures).



Co-President Beryl Goldman then spoke to the future. She noted that this year would continue the Gateway to Equity initiative by working with LCH Health and Community Services, but would add a new Priority Education Initiative to support literacy skills by reading to a classroom and/or focusing

on individual children with reading difficulties. This initiative involves working with Head Start students in either the West Chester, Coatesville, or Downingtown areas. Beryl also noted our strong membership level and encouraged members to follow us on FaceBook, passing on the (CONTINUED on next page)

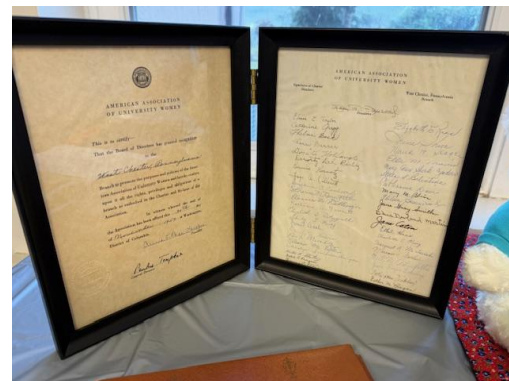




Mary Smith

Celebrating 65 Years (Continued)

QR code to interested women. Mary Smith spoke of being drawn to AAUW because of her interest in science and her support of GETT (Girls Exploring Tomorrow's Technology). And Lyn Eaton gave fascinating facts about her very considerable history, having joined in 1968 and worked, among other projects, on educating pregnant teens. For some of us "newer" members, it was amazing to hear about the projects . . .



book sales, progressive dinners . . . get out the vote . . . so many different ways we have supported women and girls over the 65 years.

And by the way, the Newsletter has come a long way!!!



Gateway to Equity Award: LCH Health and Community Services



This year's Gateway to Equity award winner is LCH Health and Community Service. LCH, based in southern Chester County, offers a wide variety of services including primary care, women's health, pediatrics, dental care, behavioral health counseling, social assistance, and educational support.

November: Help with Coat Drive

LCH is also looking for five to ten volunteers to help distribute coats at their coat drive. The coat distribution will be held on November 13 and volunteers are needed from 3:00-7:30 pm. We do not have to provide the coats, just help the children find the correct size. IMPORTANT: Because there are children involved, volunteers will need a PA criminal background check and child abuse clearances. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Marie Knox or Diane Hoffman. For questions, please contact Marie Knox at 610-496-3078 or marieknox@verizon.net or Diane Hoffman at dianehoffman83@gmail.com.

LAPP (Legislation and Public Policy)

-- Cheryl Dorris

"Stand up, speak out!" AAUW has been advocating for women since 1881. There are always important issues facing women and girls – reproductive rights, equal pay, sexual harassment, childcare, domestic violence, equal access to education and employment, access to medical care including Medicaid and Medicare, and many others. Right now, one of the issues facing both the state and national legislators is BUDGET, or lack thereof. Without a viable budget, (or continuing resolution), many programs and the employees who administer them, are left in limbo. Consider what happens to women whose livelihood depends on federal employment, Social Security, or grants/loans for education. It is important for us to "Stand up and speak out" in support of issues important to women and girls!

AAUW – West Chester-Chester County Priority Initiative

-- Peggy Staarman, Marie Knox, Kate Lindsay

Our volunteers are in the process of submitting their clearances in order to work with the Head Start students. Our mission is to support literacy skills by reading to children in the classroom and/or focusing on individual children who may benefit from more practice in reading readiness or reading skills. If you have offered to volunteer, please submit your documents to Kate Lindsay (katelindsay1949@gmail.com) as soon as possible. We need to send these clearances to the Director of Head Start quite soon so that she can match the requested locations, interests, and preferred days of each volunteer with individual teachers. Please refer to the September newsletter to find the required clearance documents and instructions for obtaining each document. We would like our program to begin by mid-October. We advise that after our volunteers receive their assignments, they should introduce themselves to the teachers before they start their interaction with the children.

If you have questions, contact Peggy Staarman (peggstaar@verizon.net), Marie Knox (marieknox@verizon.net), or Kate Lindsay (katelindsay1949@gmail.com).

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

-- Co- VPs for Membership Susan Woron Beardsley and Karen Marshall

Membership Progress Report

We wish to thank all of our summer renewals. There were quite a few of you! In November, we will have a lot of memberships come due again. We really appreciate those of you who renew on time. You make our jobs much easier! Thank you, too, to our new members. WELCOME!

We have some good news to share: Our affiliate was granted three free memberships because of our success last year in enrolling new members. We received one free membership for every three *Shape the Future* enrollees. Kudos to last year's membership team. Well done! Several of you have made excellent suggestions on how to handle the awarding of these freebies. We are reviewing our search process in order to maximize our acceptance rate. Through Susan's diligence, with an assist from Anne Anderko and Jane Schultz, we are finally able to announce our three recipients.

- Pam Hudson, Director of Nursing at Immaculata College, and our liaison to Immaculata University, has accepted a membership.
- Kate Wickersham, Director of Development at LCH and recent speaker at our May banquet, has accepted a membership.

- Catherine Alvarez, a graduate of Vanderbilt University who also works at LCH, has accepted the third membership.

We have also been busy matching the chairs of our special interest groups and committees with their prospective volunteers. While we are doing our best to cull through the paperwork from our members, we may miss someone. If no one has contacted you from your preferred groups, we urge you to read through our handbook and contact the chairs of any clubs you may want to join. Please note both Mah Jongg and Book Club II are now being offered in the afternoon, rather than the evening. There are at least two groups that are in need of leaders. Please reach out to Beryl Goldman and/or Rhoda McNitt if you would like to chair Bridge or STEM.

Please join us in wishing a warm welcome to our new members Pamela Hudson, Kate Wickersham, Catherine Alvarez, and Dorothea Lavigne. Many of you may remember Dorothea! As noted, Pam, Kate, and Catherine are recipients of our free memberships.

AAUW Prospective Members Party December 3

We are excited to host our first Prospective Members Party (PMP) for this year on December 3rd from 7:00-8:30 pm at the Sullivan House at Hershey's Mill. We currently have eighteen members who live in the Hershey's Mill community, and we are hoping to expand those numbers and secure additional members from this neighborhood. Several of our current members will also join this PMP to aid in describing the benefits of membership in AAUW. I have updated our PowerPoint with new photos which help the audience to visualize AAUW activities and members in real situations. We think that will make

an impact on them and influence their decision to join us.

We hope to have a second Prospective Members Party in the spring, possibly at Greystone. If anyone has a suggestion, or would like to host a party, please volunteer. If no one helps with connecting us, we won't be able to host another party. But we are open to suggestions!

Thanks to everyone who has sent in recent photos to update our marketing materials!

Welcome New Member: Kate Wickersham



Kate Wickersham joined [LCH Health and Community Services](#) in November 2021 as the Director of Development. With a career spanning both for-profit and nonprofit organizations, Kate has focused on strategic development, marketing and communication, education, outreach,

community partnerships, and philanthropy. Her team is dedicated to telling the story of LCH, the patients they serve, and the community and partners they collaborate with to bring health and happiness to Chester County, PA. Kate's passion for

healthcare access began with her quest for care for her sons, who have Type 1 diabetes, and championing for those who need resources to achieve optimal health.

She holds a B.A. from Widener University, is a Certified Fund-Raising Executive, and is a member of the Society for Health Care Strategy & Market Development. Additionally, she serves on the [Oxford Mainstreet, Inc.](#) Board of Directors. Kate facilitates [Bridging the Community](#), a grassroots community conversation to build organic connections to discover, form, and cement the connection between organizations and individuals. Kate loves to laugh and believes that finding joy in everyday moments is essential. She hopes that everyone has the opportunity to experience happiness in their daily lives.

**See the Chatterbox below under
Member News and Notes**

Laundromat Library League

-- Peggy Staarman

The Laundromat Library League is eleven years old and still expanding. A laundromat owner who would welcome having children's books in his Willow Grove, PA laundromat has contacted us. However, we need a steward to oversee the management of the book box. If you know of someone who lives in the Willow Grove area and who might enjoy being an LLL steward, please contact me (peggstaar@verizon.net). Also, if you know of a laundromat that has no LLL box, please let me know and I will contact the manager or owner. Thank you so much for your continuing support for our mission to provide books to children who may have few or no books in their homes.

Community Warehouse Project

-- Anne Anderko-chair



This past month on a cool September 22nd morning, Brenda Hunsberger and Paula Turocy volunteered their time and learned all about the Community Warehouse Project. They dutifully unpacked many boxes, sorted silverware and wrapped outgoing furniture for families in need. Please contact me if you would like to volunteer. The day may change each month depending upon the needs of the warehouse but timing will still be 10:00 to 12:00 weekdays. If you would like to get on the list, please e-mail me your name and days that would normally work for you to ananderko@msn.com and I will contact you as needed.

Don't forget to bring any items that you wish to donate to the warehouse to the October 15th meeting and I will be happy to drop them off. Thank you for your continued support of this worthy cause.

Anne Anderko-chair

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.

Member News and Notes

The Chatterbox

-- Karen Marshall (karenrory@comcast.net)

As explained previously, *The Chatterbox* is our monthly get-to-know-you survey. For this October newsletter, two writing prompts were sent out via group email. If you did not receive this email, please let Karen know. (karenrory@comcast.net). Members could opt to respond to either, neither, or both of the questions.



As of press-time, I have received responses from seven members, including my own. I'm optimistic that more of you will participate next month. I will try to come up with some juicy prompts. Meanwhile, please enjoy! Thank you to my "first responders"!

The options for October's newsletter included the following:

Write a haiku about a family pet.
Describe a woman who has influenced you.

Haiku about a family pet:

CHEERIO TO CHEERIO Cheerio the Rat Bit me in the schnozz one day Still cried when he died ** Karen Marshall	BENTLEY Grand dog Bentley was the best, Sad days since he passed, He now enjoys peaceful rest. **Jane Schultz	ZIVA Ziva leaps with joy, Remi's tail wags like the wind, My heart fills with love **Robin Paragone
MICCI My sweet Micci girl Valiant and fun- filled furball Heart friend forever **Steph Mittman	BELLA My sweet bird Bella, Feathers white, lands on shoulder, Softly nuzzles cheek. **Arlene Rengert	

Describe a woman who has influenced you:

Before “influencers” were a thing:

I have been influenced by many women. For this exercise, however, I think I will choose my third-grade teacher, Mrs. Burns. At 8 years old, I was already a very sensitive child. I cried very easily, as I still do. I also loved a bit of adventure. I believe I fancied myself to be a composite of Ramona (the Pest), Harriet (the Spy), Pippi Longstocking, Amelia Bedelia, and Eloise. One day at recess, I was playing something imaginative, quite possibly my version of *Caps for Sale*. The “Monkeys” would climb up the jungle gym and refuse to give the “Peddler” back his caps/jackets. While shaking our fists (IYKYK), some monkey must have pulled down on a branch. Mrs. Burns ran over to us and told us that we had hurt the tree. She made me consider Mother Nature in a new, more compassionate way. Sadly, despite her lesson in tenderness, I still tried to carry an inchworm in a tissue during a car ride from Maryland to Pennsylvania. Rest in Peace, Inchy. **Karen Marshall

A woman who has influenced me:

I have a friend named Karyll whom I have known for almost 30 years. She has influenced me with her strength of character, her fearlessness of traveling as a single person (as well as with friends) and of her determination to raise two successful and well-grounded children. She is a great guiding North Star and amazing friend. **Robin Paragone

A woman who has influenced me:

Besides my mother who was a tremendous influence on my life is my 110 year old aunt! Yes, that's right. She will be 110 on October 19. Aunt Lillian has always been the most positive person I know despite the unthinkable traumas she experienced. When, in her 40's with two young daughters, her husband was shot dead while working at a jewelry store in center city Philadelphia. Then, when her daughters were grown with their own families, two of her granddaughters came home from school and found their mother, my aunt's younger daughter, drowned in the family swimming pool. It is difficult to believe that anyone could handle all that she went through and still keep a positive view of life.

Aunt Lillian has been a source of strength and joy for all of us in the family. In fact, at her 100th birthday party, family and friends came in from all over, even from Europe, to share in the celebration of her life. If I had to guess why I think she has lived such a long life with so many who love and care about her, it's her positive attitude and her never-ending interest in everyone else. She loves being with people, asking about how they are and what's happening in their lives. She remains interested in current events and sports, keeping up on the Phillies and Eagles...even knowing the members of the teams. We are all grateful she is still in our lives and look forward to celebrating her 110th birthday with her in just a few weeks.
**Beryl Goldman

CONTINUED on next page.

A woman who has influenced me:

A woman I admire was my neighbor Edyie. She was seventy- eight when we moved in and was the epitome of a good neighbor. She always had a smile on her face, a kind word, and an ear to listen. Her steadfast devotion to family and faith was evident in her daily life. Yet, she was not a conventional woman in some ways. After raising eight children, she decided to go back to school and get her Education degree and masters (she would have qualified for the AAUW scholarship). She was vocal about causes that concerned her and paved the way to establish best practices for teaching mentally challenged students in our district. She was a wonderful role model!

****Suzy DeGeorge**

Toni Gorkin's Project Gets Penn State Certification

Many of you have heard Toni speak about her Heart of Uwchlan Project. This Pennsylvania Master Naturalist project is in its 6th year and includes 4 pollinator gardens in Uwchlan Township's Baird Park. Toni is pleased to announce that the gardens are now Penn State Master Gardener Certified Pollinator Friendly Gardens. The process to achieve certification is quite rigorous. It includes demonstrating that the gardens provide food for pollinators from early spring to late fall, with a variety of trees, shrubs, and perennials selected from lists provided. The gardens must provide a water source and pollinator nesting sites, manage invasive species, and avoid use of pesticides.

The gardens had help getting started with a grant from our affiliate's Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Fund. The project provides native plant seeds and seedlings and educates the public in frequent events.

Contact Toni (tgorkin@gmail.com) if you'd like to receive seed packets or take part in a "Winter Sowing" workshop to plant seeds in plastic jugs to get winter stratification treatment to have seedlings in spring. TIG: Consider a tour of the gardens next spring??

AAUW Mission Statement:

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. Our Chapter – 2025-2026:

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Branch Website
wccc-pa.aauw.net
*newly elected

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.

Social Media



Sandy Alexander has created a QR code to help you access the branch's Facebook page. Share it to help access the page more easily! Be sure to send pictures and information to Sandy to fb4aauw@gmail.com.

Remember to copy Toni Gorkin at tgorkin@gmail.com for the newsletter and Rhoda McNitt at rhodamcnitt@verizon.net for the web page.

Board Meetings

Board Meetings are **6:30 – 8:30 PM, first WEDNESDAY of the Month** [unless otherwise noted in the Handbook].

The Board Meetings are **held at Grove United Methodist Church** or via ZOOM [as noted in the Handbook].

The October Board Meeting will be on **October 8 – SECOND WEDNESDAY** at Grove Methodist Church.

Finance Officer's Report

Beginning Checking Account Balance <i>July 1, 2025</i>	\$ 8,217.46
Ending Checking Account Balance <i>August 31, 2025</i>	\$ 7,057.86
Mimi Jones Scholarship Fund <i>(Dedicated line item within the checking account)</i>	\$ 1,097.00
Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Fund <i>(Dedicated line item within the checking account)</i>	\$ 100.00
Vanguard Account <i>August 31, 2025</i> <i>(Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Fund)</i>	\$ 17,134.52
Chester County Community Foundation <i>August 31, 2025</i> <i>(Alice Lawson Scholarship Fund)</i>	\$296,701.20
	YTD July 1, 2025 – August 31, 2025
TOTAL Income	\$5,373.00
TOTAL Disbursements	\$6,532.60
NET GAIN (LOSS)	(\$1,159.60)
 NOTE: Three Scholarships Awarded in May 2025	 \$17,975.00



Special Interest Groups



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.

For more information contact Kim Glavin at [484 354-9681](tel:484-354-9681).

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.

TIG (Travel Interest Group)

Contact Mary Marco at mary.m.marco@gmail.com or Jane McDowell at jlwmcowell@gmail.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.

LIT I: Daytime Literature Group

Fiction & Nonfiction Lit I Book Group:

Contact: Janet Kane 610-742-5961 -

jfentonkane@gmail.com

We will be meeting on **Monday, October 20 at 1:00** at the home of Jane Schultz to discuss *Lady Tan's Circle of Women*, by Lisa See. Jean Shervais will lead the discussion.

LIT II: Literature Fiction & Nonfiction Book Group

Our October meeting will be on **Monday, October 13th at 2:00 pm** at the home of Peggy Staarman. Jane Schultz will lead the discussion about *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman. Please let 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.



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

October 2025 Newsletter

Citizen Advocacy
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