



# December: Annual Holiday Party

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>,  
 3-5:30 PM**

**At Ellerslie Farmhouse  
 At Crosslands, Kennett Square**



**Menu: Bring an appetizer, main dish, or dessert to share for 10-12 people.**

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

**Wine, coffee, tea and water will be available**

**GIFTS: We are collecting check donations made out to LCH, our 2025-2026  
 Gateway to Equity partner**

**Directions to Ellerslie (Crosslands, 1660 East Street Road,  
 Kennet 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**

*-- Beryl Goldman, Rhoda McNitt*

***“December is a month of invitation to forget  
ourselves in the service of others”***

***Robert Louis Stevenson***

When we think of the trifecta of holidays that occur during December —Chanukah (December 15), Christmas (Dec 25), and Kwanza (Dec 26), we recognize their commonalities. Each of them is symbolized by lights, focus on family and community, and the commitment to giving.

It's that time of year when we reflect on all that has happened over the past 12 months and wonder how we'll get through this December with all the family events, parties with friends, baking, cooking, and wrapping gifts. And, even though all of the preparation is exhausting, we celebrate the holidays feeling fortunate that we can share it with so many.

We acknowledge that while we are so blessed, there are so many in our own neighborhood whose wishes are more basic. How can I get a job? How can I afford to put food on the table for my family? Can I even afford one gift for each of my children . . . maybe a new winter coat that fits, or a hat, or gloves? And, how and where can I get a roof over our heads?

In the spirit of each of these holidays, let us focus on the needs of the community around us. We are already doing so much through our Gateway to Equity support and our efforts with Head Start, but this year our neighbors need our aid even more. In your “spare time,” maybe you can participate in providing a wonderful holiday for others. Chester County has plenty of non-profit agencies, so why not reach out to one or more of them to see how you can make even one family's festivities a little bit better? Maybe give a monetary donation to the Food Bank or Food Cupboard so their volunteers can purchase food targeted to their clientele. Or offer toys for children through Family Service of Chester County, Toys for Tots, Cradles to Crayons or other agencies that focus on bringing joy into their lives.

We look forward to being with you at the holiday party on December 7th, 3-5:30 PM, Ellerslie Farmhouse at Crosslands, Kennett Square.

This is the time to be grateful and to give. May each of you celebrate in your own way and look back at the past year with joy and gratitude.

Warmly,  
Rhoda and Beryl

## **Gateway to Equity Award: LCH Health and Community Services**

*-- Marie Knox and Diane Hoffman*



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.

In December, we will be collecting checks for LCH at the holiday party. If you prefer, you can donate online using the following link: <https://lchcommunityhealth.org/donate-now/> Thank you to the volunteers who helped out at the coat drive on November 13.

Marie Knox  
610-496-3078 cell  
484-947-2772 home

## LCH Coat Drive

*Thank you to Kate Wickersham for these pictures!*



Kate reported that they had a fast and furious distribution of over 300 coats to children, as well as hats, blankets, and toys! We laughed, got in our steps, and supported the community together. It was wonderful. If anyone is interested in seeing the LCH Newsletter to stay up to date, [here is the link to subscribe: CLICK HERE.](#)



## AAUW-West Chester-Chester County Priority Initiative

*-- Peggy Staarman, Marie Knox, Kate Lindsay*

Our volunteers have connected with their Head Start teachers and have begun to read to classes and to help in other ways. In addition to our AAUW members who were listed in the November newsletter, Robin Paragone has also volunteered to help with the children. So far, our volunteers have reported that they are enjoying their story times and interaction with the young children. Thank you so very much!

## Laundromat Library League

*-- Peggy Staarman*

The Laundromat Library League continues to grow. We have added sites in Texas and Wyoming, and a volunteer will be establishing an LLL site in a NJ laundromat. A few AAUW members are exploring more sites in the West Chester area. We are so grateful to the AAUW West Chester-Chester County Branch for the continuous and enthusiastic support of our organization. Recently, Arlene and George Rengert initiated a fundraising challenge for public radio station WHYY. Listeners met the challenge, so the station will be donating funds to help the LLL purchase new books. Books in Spanish are not donated often, so we need to purchase them. Many thanks to our AAUW member Arlene, the President of the LLL, and her husband!

## **Community Warehouse Project**

*-- Anne Anderko-chair*

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, member Donna Eaves volunteered at the Community Warehouse Center. From 10:00 to noon, Donna and I unpacked a deluge of donated linens and through careful measuring determined the sizes, twin, full or queen for redistribution to needy families.

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](mailto:ananderko@msn.com) and I will contact you as needed. Thank you for your continued support of this worthy cause.



## **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

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

### **Membership Progress Report**

We would like to thank the members who have turned in their November renewals. Thank you for making our job easier! We are hopeful to have received all remaining membership forms and dues by the time this newsletter is published. Please note the changes to page two of our forms. We are requesting that members indicate if they are rejoining a particular special interest group or continuing as an existing member. This allows us to contact only those chairs who have incoming new members. We hope to minimize your inbox traffic!

At this time, our membership stands at 85 amazing women.

Karen attended a Zoom meeting about strategies for recruiting new members; she passed along her notes in an email.

### **AAUW Prospective Members Party – December 3**

We are optimistic that our Prospective Members Party (PMP) on December 3rd from 7:00-8:30PM at Hershey's Mill will enable us to recruit some fantastic new members. If you know anyone who lives in the development, please encourage them to attend. Come for the presentation and the to-go bags of homemade cookies; leave with a membership form! Once again, thank you to all current members/residents who have volunteered to help us with everything from sign-up to take-down.

### **November Meeting: A Child's Light**

*Rhoda McNitt and Beryl Goldman*

At our November meeting, Leslie Holt spoke on her organization, A Child's Light, how it was formed, and the work they do with children and their families. A Child's Light is a 501 C 3 organization in operation for six years, that funds early intervention for mental health treatment to help children heal from trauma, build positive self-esteem, improve scholastics, cease self-harm, and stop the need for self-medication with drugs or alcohol. (CONTINUED on next page)

## A Child's Light (Continued)

Two staff members, Leslie Holt and a part time person, get referrals from police departments and other agencies identifying where children are experiencing trauma. They have a network of 125 trauma informed counselors, including social workers and psychologists, to whom they can refer a child. They can help children as young as two years old. They raise money from grants and donations to pay for therapy and will support care for up to a year. They are paying for 45 children currently and have provided care for 200 children since startup.

Leslie, who used to be a victim's advocate, said that although trauma from abuse can't be healed in a year, the hope is that when the child grows older, having had a good experience with therapy, she will trust that she can get care again. Leslie provided examples, a typical one being a young child who was sexually abused by her mother's boyfriend, whom she took to therapy appointments. When the child was frightened again later, she called Leslie for help; therapy and her relationship with Leslie enabled her to reach out.



Leslie Holt spoke on  
*A Child's Light*

### Who Are We?



The mission of A Child's Light (ACL) is to increase long-term quality of life for sexual assault and domestic violence survivors by early and aggressive intervention.

We are a 501(c)3 that funds early intervention and treatment for mental health treatment to help children to heal, build positive self-esteem, improve scholastics, cease self-harm, and most importantly, stop the need for self-medication with alcohol and/or drugs.

61% of high school kids report feeling sad or depressed every day (PAYS)

### Funded Treatments-

- Talk Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Parent Child Interactive Therapy (PCIT)
- Equine Therapy
- Somatic Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Art Therapy



Our therapists are licensed,  
private, trauma informed  
professionals

## Travel Interest Group Trip Planned: Festival of Trees



The Travel Interest Group invites you to **The Festival of Trees at the Pearl Buck House** at 520 Dublin Road, Perkasio, PA. The trip is planned for **Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 am**. Tickets will be purchased individually online: Adults - \$21.25, Seniors - \$18.06 – at <https://pearlsbuck.org>.

**Lunch** to follow at The Metropolitan Diner, 750 Upper State Road, North Wales, PA. (<https://www.metrodinerbar.com>)

RSVP to Mary Marco by December 3rd. for lunch and information about car pooling. [mary.m.marco@gmail.com](mailto:mary.m.marco@gmail.com)

## Member News and Notes

### The Chatterbox

-- Karen Marshall ([karenrory@comcast.net](mailto:karenrory@comcast.net))



#### DECEMBER CHATTERBOX SURVEY QUESTIONS/WRITING PROMPTS:

*Describe a holiday gift that you wanted desperately as a child but never received.*

**\*\* Karen Marshall**

When I was a young girl, I really wanted a Baby Alive doll baby. I had Barbies and Skippers and Little Kiddles and Dawn Dolls and Flatsy dolls. I even had a Crissy doll whose hair grew when you pushed in her belly button. I had other great toys like Super Elastic Bubble Plastic and Krazy Foam and Silly String and Garbage Pail Kids' stickers and Lite-Brite and a miniature potter's wheel and even a Smithsonian interactive chemistry set. But I never had a Baby Alive.

**\*\*Steph Mittman**

I was very blessed with two great parents and doting grandparents. There was only one time that Santa was unable to come through. It happened that I wanted a kitty, and since we were going to have a new sister in the house, I was told I had to wait until our new baby was old enough. Other than that and possibly a horse (which I always wanted, like many little girls), I was very lucky. I did eventually get a sweet long haired kitty, so even that Christmas present was just a little delayed.

### 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 *newly elected	<a href="http://wccc-pa.aauw.net">wccc-pa.aauw.net</a>

### Newsletter

The newsletter is published by the first of each month. The **deadline for submissions is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month** to ensure the issue can be distributed on the first of the next month. Please send emails to [tgorkin@gmail.com](mailto:tgorkin@gmail.com).

## 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]. There will be no Board Meeting in December. The January 7, 2026 Board Meeting will be a Zoom meeting.

## 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](mailto:fb4aauw@gmail.com).

Remember to copy Toni Gorkin at [tgorkin@gmail.com](mailto:tgorkin@gmail.com) for the newsletter and Rhoda McNitt at [rhodamcnitt@verizon.net](mailto:rhodamcnitt@verizon.net) for the web page.



## Finance Officer's Report

<b>Beginning Checking Account Balance</b> <i>July 1, 2025</i>	\$ 8,245.46
<b>Ending Checking Account Balance</b> <i>October 31, 2025</i>	\$9,218.04
<b>Mimi Jones Scholarship Fund</b> <i>(Dedicated line item within the checking account)</i>	\$ 1,297.00
<b>Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Fund</b> <i>(Dedicated line item within the checking account)</i>	\$ 100.00
<b>Vanguard Account</b> <i>October 31, 2025</i> <i>(Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Fund)</i>	\$ 17,911.99
<b>Chester County Community Foundation</b> <i>October 31, 2025</i> <i>(Alice Lawson Scholarship Fund)</i>	\$308,618.22
	<b>YTD</b> <b>July 1, 2025 – October 31, 2025</b>
<b>TOTAL Income</b>	\$8,847.50
<b>TOTAL Disbursements</b>	\$7,874.92
<b>NET GAIN (LOSS)</b>	\$972.58



## 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:4843549681).

### 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](mailto:deaves@live.com), to be added to the mailing list.

### TIG (Travel Interest Group)

Contact Mary Marco at [mary.m.marco@gmail.com](mailto:mary.m.marco@gmail.com) or Jane McDowell at [Jlwmcowell@gmail.com](mailto:Jlwmcowell@gmail.com). **SEE ARTICLE ABOVE for details about trip planned to The Festival of Trees at the Pearl Buck House on December 10.**

## 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](mailto:jfentonkane@gmail.com). We are changing the order of our books for 2026. On **JANUARY 19th** we will discuss *The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife* by Anna Johnson. Sandy Alexander will lead the discussion and we will meet at the home of Kay Philipps.

On **FEBRUARY 16th** we will discuss *Circe* by Madeleine Miller, and Brenda Hunsberger will lead the discussion at the home of Jean Shervais.



## LIT II: Literature Fiction & Nonfiction Book Group

There will be no meeting in December. Our January meeting will be on **Monday, January 12th at 2:00 pm** at the home of Carol Zabriskie. Peggy Staarman will lead the discussion about *The Better Sister* by Alafair Burke. Please let Carol ([no-way@verizon.net](mailto:no-way@verizon.net)) and Peggy ([peggstaar@verizon.net](mailto: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](mailto:dunn.phyllis@gmail.com).



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

*December 2025 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](http://www.aauw.org) [www.aauwpa.org](http://www.aauwpa.org) [wccc-pa.aauw.net](http://wccc-pa.aauw.net)