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# Bethlehem Bylines Brief

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## The Challenges of Educating Students in Time of Covid-19 In the Bethlehem Area School District

With all the challenges of living in the Covid-19 era, education is one the major problems facing our community. Our Zoom meeting on November 7 at 10 am will feature a talk, demonstration, and question and answer period with Marie Bachman, Chief Technology Officer in the Bethlehem Area School District. Ms. Bachman is "in charge the Information Services Department that handles the network infrastructure, server infrastructure, applications and systems, service desk, and repair services for the district. The Information Service Department works closely with the District curriculum office and principals to offer the mechanisms and tools needed by teachers and students to teach and learn online."



In her talk she will address some of the challenges the district faces in implementing the hybrid system of educating all students from kindergarten to 12th grade. For example, the district had some provisions already in place prior to the pandemic for working with secondary students and online courses, but this year they had to adapt those ideas for the elementary grades. Besides our branch members, this program will also be open to the public. Those wishing to attend must register to join the Zoom and can submit questions for Marie at that time. Like our September meeting, the program will not be interactive.

Education in the Time of COVID is an absolute must watch. It certainly would be worthy of our participation, in any small way, to endorse this effort and reach out to our elected Reps and Senators.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/02yI8tuENCL-v0Zjmbmj1kCgv\\_9CV\\_BG6EGpShN07IZ4-ZSp17\\_B1ZaNC46jCw8G9bP60Z5MtcOqEjL3.OdbN3HaaXksbJpu0](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/02yI8tuENCL-v0Zjmbmj1kCgv_9CV_BG6EGpShN07IZ4-ZSp17_B1ZaNC46jCw8G9bP60Z5MtcOqEjL3.OdbN3HaaXksbJpu0)

To register for the meeting, please email Mary Lou Vernon at [marylou.vernon53@gmail.com](mailto:marylou.vernon53@gmail.com)  
Closing day for registration and questions is October 31.

## *Executive Team Message*

### **REPORT ON AAUW WEBINAR: MEMBERSHIP PROPOSAL FROM NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 22**

Have you ever wanted to invite a friend to join you in AAUW and were too embarrassed to ask if they had a college degree? Or asked them to join only to find out they were not eligible? This was one of two topics discussed and clarified during the webinar.

AAUW is proposing an amendment to eliminate the barrier of the educational requirement. The average age of AAUW members is 72. The average age of women in the community who may be potential members/supporters of our mission is 40-50. AAUW degree requirements are a barrier to these women, not only as members, but as advocates for our values and goals. Changing the requirement would not necessarily bring new members to the table, but it would prove to our corporate partners that we do mean Equity for All Women, not just those with a college education, and open the door for us to apply for grants through corporate funding. Changing the requirement sends the message that you do not need a degree to support our mission for positive societal change.

This requirement requires a bylaw change and YOU as a member have the right to have voice and vote. You can use your voice by emailing to [connect@aauw.org](mailto:connect@aauw.org). In Spring, we will receive notice of the intent to amend bylaws 60 days in advance of the vote. The quorum needed to vote is 5% of the current membership and 2/3 of the votes are needed to pass the amendment. In the past, only 5-10% of the membership has voted. This will be the time to finally show your support, not only for AAUW by voting, but for your friends and neighbors who finally have the right to belong.

The second issue discussed was a proposal for a dues increase and the sound logic behind the proposal. First, some history:

2018-2020	\$59	2008-2019	\$49
2007-2008	\$47	2006-2007	\$45
2005-2006	\$43	2004-2005	\$41

For most of the 90s, dues were \$29 and increases at that time were voted on at national conventions.

The proposed increase is to provide for the nuts and bolts of the organization: Staff salaries, rent, utilities, equipment and office supplies. The professional staff is composed of 46 fulltime employees; three years ago it was 107. Portions of the office were consolidated and the extra space was rented out. National conventions (which were held at a huge financial loss) were halted. AAUW officers and staff have been extremely frugal, redefining finances and downsizing to cut costs. Our yearly dues do not keep pace with the rate of inflation and we all know that the cost of living is always increasing. Our dues pay only 20% of our annual budget. Increasing dues will help cover important functions such as the Connect Team, critical; technology and infrastructure (website and IT) and other member support. Grants received are restricted to program costs, not for the cost of doing business.

The proposals under consideration are a graduated increase OR a onetime flat increase of \$3- \$10 per year. This change is under the auspices of the Board of directors. They will meet in October and vote on the method and amount of dues increase. National will notify us in its next communication, and any changes will be effective at the next renewal scheduled for July 1, 2021. There will be no changes to C/U members, students or Life members.

You may contact AAAUW directly to discuss or voice your opinions, or contact Linda Robbins for information or to answer questions.

Your Executive Team

## **Program Update:**

The program committee is sad to report that two events for this year have been cancelled. Both the **Holiday Luncheon which was scheduled for December 3 at Moravian Village, and the December 13 performance at the Pennsylvania Playhouse have been called off** due to the COVID-19 virus. We know this is a disappointment to our members as these events have been extremely popular in past years. We will try to schedule some chat activities online during the winter months to give us a chance to interact with each other.

Hopefully, Spring will bring a vaccine or a slow down of the virus and allow us to reschedule.

Sincerely

Your Program Team

## ***Membership and COVID-19***

COVID-19 is still all around us, and our members' safety remains AAUW's top priority. While we have been unable to present our usual engaging in-person programs, we have been creative in planning some virtual events for our members. Our Program Committee has worked tirelessly to offer exciting and well-thought-out virtual programming. Two of these events are Shape the Future events, which have been opportunities to sign up new members at a half-price membership. We are happy to report that these events are still available to new members. Ask a friend, family member, or work associate, and invite them for two Shape the Future Virtual events this year. Collect the membership money and membership form on the day of the event, and they can join at half price, \$42.50. The first event is on Saturday, November 7, at 10 am. The topic: "Education in the "new normal" World of COVID-19 - Challenges and Successes " presented by Marie Bachman, Chief of Technology Officer for Bethlehem Area School District. Members and guests must register, and there will be an added opportunity for questions answered virtually. In March, Dr. Sirry Alang, Associate Professor of Sociology and Health, Medicine, and Society at Lehigh University, will speak about issues concerning a healthy society. Both these programs offer an opportunity for women to join our Bethlehem Branch. They will have an opportunity to take part in the many offerings our branch provides through membership. One other item to share with prospective members is the newly revised and updated AAUW national website ( [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) ). This site is full of information and topics of interest for everyone. This year, our creativity is needed to attract new members, and these events may be the key.



## **HELP WANTED**

Caring, empathic member with legible handwriting, needed to send timely sympathy cards to AAUW members experiencing a loss in their immediate family. Cards and postage supplied. If interested, contact Linda Robbins.



# MORAVIAN COLLEGE

AAUW Moravian E-SAF (Student Affiliate) In October, a small group gathered at the club's weekly meeting but they were SOOO grateful to AAUW-Bethlehem for your donations.

The Feminine Product Project, supplying bathrooms around campus, is a huge success! In fact, one Moravian student even tweeted her appreciation to AAUW Moravian. She was unprepared one day as a commuter but was saved by the affiliate's basket in the bathroom. So thank you for helping women of all ages around campus!



Usually the gang works on Love your Body Day in October but the main focus this year is GOTV (Get Out the Vote). Since the campus is more restrictive this semester, plans have slowed down with the student affiliate. They are taking things month to month, instead of planning for the year. However, the students said they will definitely reach out to the branch for donations or advice or any other way to make connections. As the semester has worn on us -- both physically and emotionally -- even more this year, your support really brightened their day!

THANK YOU!

Trisha Moller, E-SAF Liaison

## Diversity: Deeds and Dialogue

The group decided to try a new model. Over at least the next 6-8 months, the group will be using the publication identified below; two members will identify topics from among the Daily's publication and lead the discussions. Each new pair also will be responsible for handling the logistics of running the group-- sending out agendas, following up, etc. Kathy Morgan and I agreed to be the first pair. So in addition to planning the meeting content as per below, we are sending you this first notice, You can expect to receive the next one from another member, however. Hope this is clear. We are going to settle our November meeting date and content at the Oct 28 meeting; The next months are scheduled and DDD will be forwarding that information to you. November is not scheduled yet because we may be meeting for an action event but needed more research before we made a decision. Whether the October submission is timely or not, we thought it would give members a chance to learn about the new format and procedures. If you have any questions, don't hesitate. **New members welcomed!**

Diversity: Deeds and Dialogue

Meeting: October 28 at 7:00 pm (Zoom)

Discussion: "Protect the Polls" (September 27) and " Early Care Providers" (Oct 2, 2020)

Preparation: Subscribe for free to Anti-racism Daily publication at: [www.Antiracismdaily.com](http://www.Antiracismdaily.com). Read and reflect on above issues, found in the Archives.

Cathy Gumlock will send an e-mail Zoom invite in advance.



## **Group Information :**

**Diversity: Deeds and Dialogue:** Members of this group come from the Bethlehem, Easton and Allentown branches. This group is concerned with social action as well as social justice. The group decided to try a new model. Over at least the next 6-8 months, the group will be using the free publication *Anti-racism Daily*. Two members will identify topics from among the Daily's publication and lead the discussions. Each new pair also will be responsible for handling the logistics of running the group--sending out agendas, following up, etc. Using various media, the group examines the role of society in the problems of diverse populations (age, gender, race, ability and religion). If you have questions, please contact Rosemary [robaker356@gmail.com](mailto:robaker356@gmail.com)

**Bacchae:** Bacchae decided to meet again on Zoom for our next meeting, Thursday, Nov. 12 at 7:00. Rita and Myra are co-hostesses and will choose and deliver their Hostess Choice of wines as we have done the last two months. Theme for this year is Hostess Choice of Wines. Any questions? Contact Phyllis Wargo

**Mystery Paperback :** The Mystery Book Club will be meeting on Zoom during the month because of Covid-19. New members are always welcome to our book club. Please contact Mary Dawson if you wish to be added to our Zoom list.

**Paperback I :**Members choose and read same paperback book of various genres for discussion . Please contact Myra Saturen [myra125@hotmail.com](mailto:myra125@hotmail.com) with any questions.

**Paperback II:** Paperback II will meet Tuesday, November 17th at 7:00pm  
Our book choice for November is " The Wives Of Los Alamos" by Tara Shea Nesbit. We will meet in person at Rita Bergstrom's Home in Nazareth. Our reviewer is Linda Zimmerman. Please contact Rita @ 610-365-2566 and let her know if you will ATTEND. Remember your face mask.  
PPBII BOOK GROUP will not meet in December. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 19th @ 7:00pm- Book choice and hostess TBD. We all look forward to meeting in person. We welcome new members. My contact cell # 610-392-0891 My email address is: [jmfwagner@live.com](mailto:jmfwagner@live.com) Joanne Wagner, PPBII BOOK GROUP Leader

**Out to Lunch Bunch:** Cindy and Joan look forward to organizing a lunch as soon as it's safe to eat in a restaurant again. Until then, stay safe everyone. Cindy Huhn and Joan Howe



### ***WELCOME BACK***

Bernie Gardiner, we are pleased that you are able to join our branch again. Bernie and her husband Keith are long time residents of Bethlehem. She graduated from Muhlenberg College in 1989 and from Lehigh University in 1998. She was an avid member of the Bethlehem Garden Club. Please join me in welcoming Bernie.

According to all the news articles, August 26, 2020 was the 100th Anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. But we all know that this is not correct. The vote was not “given”. Many women fought long and hard to earn this right for themselves and future women.

But did you know that the 19th Amendment discriminated against many women of color? During the Suffrage movement, many women of color worked hard to get the amendment passed. Mabel Lee led Chinese and Chinese American women down the parade on Fifth Avenue in New York. Many parades excluded black women or told them to march in the back of the parade. However, Ida B. Wells, who co-founded the NAACP, marched up front anyway. Native American women were barred from voting until 1924 due to federal citizenship laws.

Do you know about the women in the Lehigh Valley who were working to pass the 19th Amendment? When women could already vote in 12 other states, Pennsylvania women were still parading. On August 28, 1915, M. Constance Erdman was a leading supporter of suffrage in the Lehigh Valley. She ran a business selling insurance to widowed and single women when they could not buy it from other companies at that time. Ruth Frick, a descendent of the founders of Bethlehem Steel and the Lehigh Valley Railroad worked to get the “Women’s Liberty Bell” to come to the Lehigh Valley. Dr. Annie Howard Shaw came to speak at the ceremony, even though she had been told she “had the mind of a man.”

Even after so much work, Pennsylvania’s election day November 3, 1915 was a disaster. Fifty thousand more men overwhelmingly voted no to the 19th Amendment. After this defeat, M. Constance Erdman and Ruth Frick formed the Allentown Women’s Club. They continued to work for five more long years to pass the 19th Amendment.

**Please honor these courageous women by voting! Encourage others, especially women to vote. Offer to help others to register to vote, give rides to the polls or to turn in their mail-in ballot.**

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