

# **Board of Directors Executive Team**

Finance Officer Linda Robbins

Vice Presidents - Programs Olga Conneen MaryLou Vernon Phyllis Wargo

Vice Presidents- Membership Ann Brown Mary Dawson

Mary Dawson Amy Fields

**Secretary Catherine Kotanchik** 

#### **Coordinators**

Archivist Linda Robbins

Book Fair Amy Fields Rita Bergstrom

**Communications Linda Robertson** 

FaceBook Administrator Trisha Moller

**Newsletter Editor** Beth Corroda

Nominating Debbie Spinney

Public Policy Joan Howe

Scholarship Frances Bentkowski

Website Madison Scarfaro

Yearbook Shirley Daluisio

# Bethlehem Bylines Brief

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 45

FEBRUARY 2021



# Moravian College Student Group Presents February Branch Program

# **Applying Intersectional Feminism to AAUW**

Friday, February 26, 2021 4pm WHERE: In the Comfort of your Home This will be a ZOOM Presentation and Discussion

Plan now to join this very current topic. Let's support our Student Friends at Moravian College.

Also a discussion of: <a href="https://www.thelily.com/how-many-women-of-color-have-to-cry-top-feminist-organizations-are-plagued-by-racism-20-former-staffers-say/">https://www.thelily.com/how-many-women-of-color-have-to-cry-top-feminist-organizations-are-plagued-by-racism-20-former-staffers-say/</a>

#### 2021-2022 OFFICER NOMINATIONS

We are pleased to announce the following nominees for Branch officer for 2021- 2022:

Finance Officer: Linda Robbins

<u>Vice Presidents of Membership:</u> Ann Brown, Nan Faust, and Kathy Kahler

Election of these nominees will be held in April. Our heartfelt thank you to these members for stepping up to serve our Branch!

Debbie Spinney, Rita Bergstrom, Louise Wisser, Nominating Committee



# Applying Intersectional Feminism to AAUW

#### **FEBUARY 26 @ 4:00**

#### Please read this link before attending

https://www.thelily.com/how-many-womenof-color-have-to-cry-top-feministorganizations-are-plagued-by-racism-20former-staffers-say/



For questions and/or additional information contact Stacey Zaremba at zarembas@moravian.edu



- GO TO HTTPS://ZOOM.US
- ONCE YOU ARE SIGNED UP CLICK JOIN MEETING ON TOP OF PAGE
- ENTER THIS ZOOM CODE
- 913 8682 3057
- (IF YOU ALREADY HAVE AN ACCOUNT GO TO THIS LINK
   HTTPS://MORAVIAN.ZOOM.US/J/913868230 57)
- ALLOW MIC ACCESS AND VIDEO ACCESS



# Executive Team Message

Welcome, everyone, to the new year. It felt so refreshing to bid good riddance to 2020, a year we likely will never forget! Unfortunately, 2021 already is tarnished, but the shining light of hope is also present with the arrival of the Covid19 vaccines.

As we move into this new year, our branch continues adapting and trying to maintain as many of our normal activities as possible. Zooming has certainly been a real help.

A new project that we have undertaken is participation in the AAUW Five-Star National Recognition Program. According to the AAUW website, this program "rewards affiliates (state, branches, and other organizations) for aligning their work with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the organization's mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls." As many of you already know, this program began July of 2019 and continues through June 2021. The 5 Stars are identified as 1) Programs, 2) Advancement, 3) Communications and External Relations, 4) Public Policy and Research, 5) Governance and Sustainability.

So far we have earned one star for achievement in the Advancement category. In November 2020 we were recognized in the Keystoner as one of 9 Pennsylvania branches to be awarded stars between July 2019 and October 2020. The criteria for Advancement involves actions that include monetary gift giving "for the greatest need," retaining 90% or more of branch membership, and submitting annual dues by September 30. Currently we are working on submitting information for the Programs, Membership, and Governance and Sustainability categories.

Being recognized for our work should be encouraging to all our members. It is you, the members, who make our Bethlehem branch one of vitality and commitment to AAUW goals. I say that this is another great way to start this new year!

#### The Executive Team

# Welcome to our new Public Policy Chair, Joan Howe.

Joan was raised outside of Detroit, Michigan and earned a Masters in Education at Eastern Michigan University. She taught in Michigan, Wisconsin and then for 17 years in the primary grades of the Bethlehem schools.

Joan has two children and two grandchildren. Even though they all live in Bethlehem, she is really looking forward to socializing with them soon!

Joan enjoys walking every day, and loves to ski and play golf, whichever sport the weather permits. Joan is an avid reader, loves going to the movies and watching the Oscars. She has spent many hours canvassing for local, state and national candidates and organizing events for Lehigh Valley 4 All. This will be great experience for her new position at AAUW.

Joan joined AAUW in the fall of 2019 and agreed to co-lead the Out to Lunch Bunch just as Covid-19 took hold. She hopes to go out to lunch and work at the Book Fair as soon as we can safely do so.

Thank you for helping our members become more aware of important policies and legislation important to the mission of AAUW.

# **Public Policy – Judicial Gerrymandering**

There is a constitutional amendment before outrstate legislature. If passed, HB38 would require judges to run for election in districts drawn by lawmakers, undermining constitutional checks and balances and allowing a new version of gerrymandering. No other state elects their judges this way.

To bring this constitutional amendment before the voters in the spring's primary, the amendment must pass in two consecutive legislative years. This bill was rushed through the general assembly last year with only 9 minutes of discussion. There was no public input.

For the past 4 years the organization Fair Districts PA has fought hard to eliminate gerrymandering and have our congressional districts drawn up by a nonpartisan panel. This organization helped create a bill with bipartisan support, cosponsors and 100,000 signatures and it was never given a final vote. Now our legislative leaders are rushing this gerrymandering bill through the General Assembly. This constitutional amendment must be voted on by Feb 15 in order for it to appear on the spring primary ballot. Fair Districts PA, League of Women Voters of PA and Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts believe this poorly written bill should be vetoed.

To learn more, google Fair Districts PA judicial gerrymandering.

Sen. Boscola 610-868-8667 boscola@pasenate.com

Rep. Samuelson 610-867-3890 ssamuelson@pahouse.net

Rep. Flood 610-746-2100

Rep. Freeman 610-867-3890

Rep. Emrick 610-588-8011

Rep. Mackenzie

Rep. McNeill 610-266-1273

aflood@pahousegop.com rfreeman@pahouse.net

jemrick@pahousegop.com mmackenzie@pahouse.net

jmcneill@pahouse.net

Joan Howe Public Policy Chair 610-867-3019



When you see Joan Howe, thank her for accepting the position of Public Policy Chair

### **AAUW Action Fund Washington Update**

AAUW has communicated with the Biden-Harris transition team about the actions we and our coalition partners would like to see the incoming administration take to support the economic security and education of women and girls. COVID-19 has had a huge impact on women and people of color, and we must take bold steps to address economic disparities and inequitable educational opportunities that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

We asked the Biden-Harris Administration to focus on equity issues, including increasing the minimum wage, advancing pay equity, canceling student debt, suspending implementation of the new Title IX rule, and prioritizing gender and racial equity across departments and programs. You can read AAUW Priorities for Biden/Harris here.

We urged them to appoint candidates to key cabinet positions who have a deep understanding of systemic barriers to equal opportunity faced by historically marginalized communities and have a record of advocating for the civil rights of all working people and students they serve.

# 59th Annual Book Fair 2021

#### Dear Friends of AAUW Book Fair,

As Co-Chairs of Book Fair we have been in frequent contact since the cancellation of Book Fair 2020 due to the state shutdown for Covid-19.

More recently we've spoken to the Executive Committee twice and the same conversations with the City of Bethlehem Recreation Department. The City has strict rules for number of people in the warming room of the Ice Rink and since we will be spending about 10 days of the 19 sorting days in the warming room, that will sorely limit the time needed to get all the donations sorted and then out to the ice rink. The limits will also be in force for the sale and will be limited to how many can be in the rink. We would be counting those going in and then there would be a line waiting to go in. It won't be very conducive to a prosperous sale.

We tried to consider alternatives and different scenarios and kept coming back to the same questions.

#### "Would we get donations?" and "Would anyone come to the sale?"

It is an inordinate amount of work for potentially a less than spectacular result. With that said, it has been decided by the Executive Board to cancel the 59th Annual Book Fair 2021 for the health and safety of the members, volunteers and our shoppers and extended community.

Keep saving your books!!

We can now look forward to the 60th Annual Book Fair 2022.

Rita Bergstrom

Amy Fields

Your Book Fair Committee hard at work in Rita's basement



Let's check with Nazareth and see if we can have the Annual Book Fair for this year at Rita's house. We have books and volunteers already there. ( Ha ha ha!)

#### The AAUW Issue of Open Membership is Coming up for a Vote by Members

On January 20 Inauguration Day an extraordinary young woman, Amanda Gorman, captured the hearts of all Americans as she read her poem on Inauguration Day. Yes, there is always light, but we must be brave enough to see it, hear it, and be it. There is a call to see the light to our AAUW membership right now. We must look at the National AAUW recommendations for a change in the bylaws for Open Membership.

#### Open Membership Bylaw Changes

Change is difficult, but with enough information and background on proposed changes, we can make informed decisions on this topic. National AAUW recommends opening membership to all women who hold our missions and our core values of equality for all and remove any barriers that keep us from achieving these outcomes. They hope to achieve a more diverse and inclusionary organization. They strongly recommend eliminating the degree requirement for membership to accomplish this. The following are some key points to consider in making an informed decision on the proposed changes.

- •This change is about inclusion. AAUW has a vision of Equity for All. Our practices should align with this vision.
- •We need to create a more diverse membership bringing new perspectives to meet our mission of advancing gender equity.
- •The educational requirement is in opposition to recruiting more diverse and younger members.
- •Education's role comes in many forms, including Career Technical Education, on the job training, and similar routes.
- •Not having a degree does not exclude advocates from working on our mission. As an organization that promotes equity, we do not treat non-degree individuals as equals. Sometimes, we are seen as an exclusionary and elitist organization and have not evolved.
- •Organizations and foundations prefer to work with and fund other organizations that adhere to diversity, inclusion, and equity policies and practices. We are losing dollars to fund our missions in the future.

This spring, between April 7 and May 17, our members will vote on a change to our bylaws to open membership to non-degree members. We need at least 5% of our members to vote and a 2/3 vote to amend the bylaws. Please take time to review, research and consider this change to our bylaws.

Be brave enough to see it, consider it, and change it.

More information on Open Membership can be found on the following link.

Copy and paste in your browser.

https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2021/01/Membership-Requirement-full-talking-points.pdf

# **Group Information:**

<u>Diversity: Deeds and Dialogue:</u> 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 <u>robaker356@gmail.com</u>

**Bacchae:** The Feb. meeting for Bacchae will meet on Zoom on Feb 11 at 7:00. Rita and Phyllis will serve as hostesses and will notify you when they will be delivering your wine packages. Fran will host the Zoom session and will email you sign on instructions. Please let them know if you will be attending or not. I hope to see you all then. Any questions? Contact Phyllis Wargo

<u>Mystery Paperback:</u> Are you craving more intrigue in your life? If you are looking for more thrills in your life and a great "Who Dunnit", then this group is for you. New members are always welcome. Contact Mary Dawson for more information

<u>Paperback I</u>: Paperback I is online. February 15 we will be discussing The Country of Women by Susan Straight. Please contact Myra Saturen myra125@hotmail.com with any questions.

<u>Paperback II</u>: The PPBII BOOK GROUP will meet in February VIA Zoom. Pat Knoll is our hostess and will host the Zoom meeting on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 7:00pm. Our book for February- "Killers of the Flower Moon" by David Grann, a NF book regarding the Osage tribe murders and the birth of the FBI.

Please call Pat or email and let her know if you are attending. We welcome new members- contact me if you would like to join our book group- <a href="mailto:jmfwagner@live.com">jmfwagner@live.com</a> or 610-392-0891

Keep on reading! Joanne Wagner

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

# Update from the Membership Committee

2020 has been a very difficult year for all of us, and we hope all the members of our branch are staying healthy and safe. We all long for the days when we can see each other in person instead of on Zoom, renew longstanding friendships and make new ones. In spite of all the barriers we have faced, your membership committee has done their best to recruit new members, inviting them to Zoom meetings and talking about the important mission of AAUW.

Please join us in this effort as we all await the vaccine and a better future. **Thank you!**