



# Bethlehem

## Bylines Brief

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# Help Wanted

**Yes, it is a stark message.** At this time of the year especially, we don't want to be bothered with thinking about the day-to-day running of our AAUW Branch. However, it is necessary to start planning NOW for the 2024-2025 Executive Team. This year we will be electing a new Secretary and a new Program Vice President. Kristina Hollingsworth has agreed to stand for another two-year term as Program Vice-President, but she needs a Co-Vice President to stand with her. Since Kristina already has two years under her belt, she will make an excellent tutor.

**Brenda Tomlinson** is this year's chair of the Nominating Committee. She has all the job descriptions, so if you are curious about what is involved with either office, please call Brenda. As you participate in the various study groups, look around for suitable candidates. Members may lack the confidence to put themselves forward. Saying to your friend, "You'd be good at that," may provide the boost of confidence needed.

Have you ever posted anything on **Facebook**? That is all we need in a **new Facebook Administrator**. We want to encourage younger members to join our Branch, so we like to keep up a good appearance on Facebook.

Our newsletter editor, Beth Corroda, has continuing medical problems, so we would like to have someone take over the backup position on a more permanent basis. The **Bethlehem Bylines Brief** is already set up in Microsoft Publisher and it is fairly simple to change text and photos each month. Each month articles are submitted by officers, coordinators and study groups with a deadline that allows 10 days for completion. If you are moderately competent on the computer and like language, this is a fun job you can do at home.

Thank you for taking the time to read this request for help. The Allentown Branch had to disband recently, because not enough members would step forward to steer their branch into the future.

*Olga Conneen and Cathy Kotanchik, Communications*

## ***Food For Thought***

Here are some things to consider when making your decision regarding the Motion to re-allocate Book Fair revenue so that no funds go to National AAUW. We will have a discussion of pros and cons at our special meeting on March 9 at 1:00pm. Everyone will have a chance to present the pros and cons of the issue at the meeting, but I would like to remind Branch members of certain important facts.

**Our Mission:** AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. We are the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls.

What does AAUW do for us?

1. The National Organization offers fellowships and grants for advanced research and degrees; Work Smart, Start Smart, and Money Start Smart programs; Leadership programs; and STEM programs.
2. The National Website offers programming ideas' access to other branch information, websites, and newsletters; discussion of public policy issues and research; and a HELP center.
3. National goals for this year include shrinking gender pay gaps, championing equal access in education, with continued focus on Title IX, and the expansion of the number of women in leadership.
4. National's strong Public Policy Team promotes awareness of issues and actions, maintains an effective Lobby Corps, and generates the 2-Minute Activist.

Our contributions to National AAUW assure its continuation. If it ceases to exist, so do we! And so does our Book Fair. Study Groups may continue, as long as they do not use the name AAUW. If we make no branch contribution, we will not be able to recognize any individual members as our annual *Named Gift Honoree*.

Some members argue that our annual dues should be sufficient. However, most professional organizations, colleges, and religious organizations solicit additional funds, over and above regular dues or tithes. We are not unique.

As members, we are expected to uphold the mission and embrace the values of AAUW. We are a mission-based organization, not a social club. We dedicate our strength, education, and talents to further the mission. This includes our fundraising efforts.

Any questions on our Mission and Values can be directed to the Executive Team members. Questions regarding our branch finances and overall financial health may be directed to me for clarification.

*Linda Robbins*, Finance Officer

## Program Notes:

Hard to believe the end of the year is near. We hope your Thanksgiving was full of good food and good cheer. Such a busy time. Holiday shopping, parties, family visits .

Don't forget that our annual Holiday Luncheon is Saturday, December 9th. We hope you have mailed your check for \$25 with your meal selection. This should be received by Linda Robbins by **December 3rd. If you need a ride, please contact Linda Robbins.**

### HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2023**  
**12:00 NOON**  
**MORAVIAN VILLAGE OF BETHLEHEM**  
**526 Wood Street**  
**Bethlehem 18018**  
**\$25 per person**

**MENU:**  
**Vegetable Soup**  
**Choice of:**  
**1. Stuffed Chicken Breast**  
**2. Shrimp Caesar Salad**  
**3. Pasta Primavera**  
**Dessert: Carrot Cake**

**PLEASE MAIL YOUR CHOICE OF MAIN COURSE WITH YOUR CHECK FOR \$25.00 PAYABLE TO AAUW-BETHLEHEM TO LINDA ROBBINS, 414 KENILWORTH COURT, BETHLEHEM, PA 18018**



Our **Painting With A Twist** event was a great success. We had nine "artists" create one of a kind masterpieces. We were led by resident artist Matt who kept us entertained with his outgoing personality. Wine and refreshments added to the lighthearted spirit of the evening. A highlight was when everyone was instructed to paint a portrait of Kristina on a paper plate. See the lovely portraits! Can you guess who won? Her initials are L.Z. *Linda Federico & Kristina Hollingsworth, Co-VPs*



## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

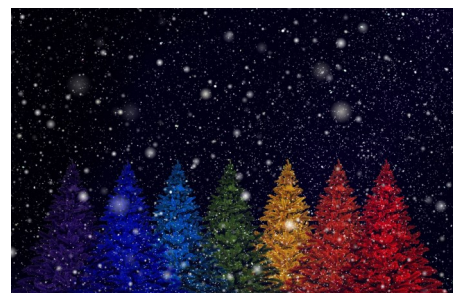
Kathy Kohler welcomes new member, Bernadette Enriquez at the New Member Gathering at Debbie Spinney's home. Bernadette enjoys living in Bethlehem and has developed many interests and activities. She became familiar with AAUW through Book Fair and will be a welcome volunteer this coming year.

**BOOK FAIR 2024:** In this season of giving, we are thinking about what Book Fair gives to us. Yes, it gives us a few headaches but it really gives back to us in so many ways. The gift of tens of thousands of books is huge but only the start. This project gives many of us fellowship, joy and the satisfaction of a job well done. The biggest gift is the volunteer hours given by our members and the community. Countless hours of planning, organizing, sorting and selling add up to our many successful Book Fairs.

As we plan for the 2024 sale, we have all of our section chairs in place. What we need now are members who will volunteer to be "helpers" in various sections. A helper will give priority to a specific section when she/he arrives to work at the rink. Helpers are needed for the Travel, Mystery and Home & Hobby sections. In addition, helpers are needed to work with sales. Please let us know if you can be a "helper" next April.

Wishing you a happy holiday season,

Debbie Spinney, Book Fair Co-Chair  
Joan Howe, Book Fair Co-Chair



## **HOT TOPICS: BOOK BANS AND MORE: HOW CAN WE HELP?**

The Hot Topics group met on November 1, 2023 at the Bethlehem Area Public Library. Our review of the survey information gathered on book banning in our local communities and beyond moved to a discussion of issues underlying the rise in challenges to libraries and schools not only about books but also curriculum, LGBT polices, board policies and procedures. Among the factors raised were the role of established organizational networks and offshoots such as Moms4Liberty, White Christian Nationalism, opposition to public schools, funding for schools and libraries, and partisan politics. It was agreed that we would work on a plan of action to aid school and public libraries in mitigating the impacts of book bans and censorship in PreK-12 education.

Getting off to a quick start, AAUW Easton and AAUW Bethlehem members met on Thursday, November 16th with directors/staff from local libraries to talk about the challenges, brainstorm ideas, identify resources, and make connections. Hosted by the Easton Area Public Library at the invitation of its director, Jennifer Long, the exchange of perspectives, insights, and resources on a range of issues from library policies and procedures, public library and school library relations, the role of librarian in the community, library funding, public understanding of the role of a public library and challenges faced was stimulating! The group closed the dialogue with a proposal to create “Allyships” between AAUW members and the libraries and agreed to move forward with the development of “matches-ups” and ideas for fostering and enabling these relationships.

We know that such a project can be potentially a large undertaking whose success lies in the presence of many hands. At this time then, we will be engaged with ally building and are looking to assess interest in participation from Bethlehem and Easton branch members. In short, if this “hot topic” concerns you, if you want to help-- in communications, networking, ally building, news tracking, strategic planning come join us and others such as the Stop Moms for Liberty, BASD Proud Parents, our state senators and representatives, media outlets (social and news organizations) as well as partners in schools and libraries themselves.

The next group meeting will be January 3, 2024, 1:00pm at the Palmer Library, One Weller Place, Easton, 18045.

**Want to sign up to help or want more information? Let Carol and Susan know.**

*Carol Inman and Susan McNamara*

## The Book Nook



One of the books Paperback I read for November was *Hear My Voice* by Marcia Rudin. It is about the rise of women in leadership positions in American religion. It followed three women, a Catholic Nun who dreamed of being a priest, a young Jewish woman who dreamed of being a rabbi, and a young Presbyterian woman who dreamed of being a minister. In this book the historical details are very precise. The characterization of the three women and others in the book, however, seemed a bit weak.

Coincidentally the dog-lover in our book group finished *Hear My Voice* and began to read *The Other Family Doctor* by Karen Fine, DVM. Although Karen began veterinary school in 1990, there was still a lot of prejudice against women veterinary students. This has changed, as the majority of veterinary students are now women. The dog-lover's much appreciated veterinary practice is all women. This book is filled with wisdom and humor: a delightful read!

### **Mardi Metzgar**

*Trust* by Hernan Diaz is the story of a wealthy 1920s Wall Street tycoon and his aristocratic wife as told by four different characters - a journalist, the tycoon himself, his secretary and his wife. It is a tale of power, reputation, deceit and the role of women. Which version is the truth and which can we trust?

In *Death at La Fenice* by Donna Leon, Commissario Brunetti investigates the death of a world famous conductor who is found poisoned during the intermission of a performance at the La Fenice Opera House. Like an opera, the investigation includes love, conflict, and tragedy.

### **Olga Conneen**

## Information :

### INTER-BRANCH STUDY GROUPS

**Bacchae:** Bacchae met in November and tasted and rated wines from France with Fran Bentkowski serving as hostess. The white wine was Les Legends R Bordeaux Blanc, a blend of 90% Sauvignon blanc with 10% Semillon. It was produced by Baron de Rothschild (Lafite). The red wine, a blend of 50% Grenache, 30% Syrah, and 20% Mourvedre, was produced by Les Freres Bastards (the Fat Bastards winery). We enjoyed both wines, rating them at 89 and 85 respectively. After tasting these two wines, Fran surprised us with a bottle of a liqueur that was given to her. It was a liqueur made by Carthusian monks since 1737, and the recipe was supposedly a recipe for an "elixir of long life". After taking a sip, everyone agreed that it wasn't pleasant at all, but instead was sticky, syrupy, and tasted like cough medicine! At least the wines were good. Our next meeting will be on January 11 at 3:00 at Rita Bergstrom's home, with Amy Fields serving as co-hostess. They will take us to another European country to taste and rate. There will be NO December meeting. In January we will decide whether or not to meet in February. Happy holidays to everyone! Any questions? Contact Phyllis Wargo.

**Mystery Paperback:** We do not meet in November or December. The next meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2024. Cathy Kotanchik will lead the conversation about the collaboratively authored *The Floating Admiral*. We will meet at 1:00pm at Anne Hammersmith's home (3131 Patterson Dr., Bethlehem, 18017; 610-867-7322.) Contact Susan McNamara to join us in 2024! The Mystery Study Group does not meet in February.

**Out to Lunch Bunch:** We met at The View at Morgan Hill in Easton on October 8th. A smaller group, but nonetheless chatty! One of our new members joined in the fun and conversation. Everyone enjoyed their meal choices. Great place for a lovely meal and conversation. We will meet again in January on the 10th. We will have more information after Christmas. Look for an email!

Photo from left: Debbie Spinney, Bernadette Enriquez, Joan Howe, Jeanne Eroh, Fran Bentkowski, Susan Seidel, Rita Bergstrom, Mary Dawson. Photo by Amy Fields.



**Paperback I:** Paperback I will not meet in December. Our January meeting will be in the home of Froy Thompson on Tuesday, January 23 at 1:00 p.m. We will discuss *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O'Farrell. Our February meeting will be in the home of Mardi Metzger at 1:00 on February 27. We will discuss *Running With Champions* by Lisa Frederic. Mardi Metzger, chair, 484-951-7023.

**Paperback II:** Fourteen members gathered at the home of Marylou Vernon to discuss the book *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christi Lefteri. What an important book just at this time! It is a story about refugees from the war in Syria trying to get to Great Britain. It showed in great detail the danger, hardship and humanity of those seeking asylum. This book was chosen before the Israel / Hamas war, but it was so pertinent to what we see on the news every day. There will be no book club meeting in December. Our next meeting will be January 16 at the home of Rita Bergstrom. We will be viewing the recorded Broadway play, *Come from Away*. On Feb 13, Debbie Spinney will host our discussion of the book *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkinson, Reviewer is Pat Knoll. On March 19, Linda Federico will host *Necessary Trouble* by Drew Gilpin Faust. The reviewer is Linda Zimmerman. **we have changed the book for our April 16 meeting to *The Bookmark* by Anne Supsic.** We will have the author come to speak to our group as the story is set right here in Bethlehem during the Revolutionary War. She may also lead a tour around sights from the book in Bethlehem. Linda Zimmerman will host but we will not need a reviewer.

**Public Policy Group:** A small group met on Monday, November 13th. We spent our time reflecting on the election. We felt voters had educated themselves on their local school board races. We were happy the most extreme "Moms for Liberty" candidates lost. Come join us on January 8th, 3:00pm at Joan Howe's house.