

## 2024 AAUW BETHLEHEM AWARD RECIPIENTS

### Member Making a Difference

The Member Making a Difference Award, also presented by AAUW PA and the Bethlehem Branch, is presented to Mary Lou Vernon and Phyllis Wargo for their contributions to the branch and service to AAUW. Mary Lou and Phyllis were Co-VPs of the Program during the pandemic, assuring that members had relevant and timely programming via Zoom and keeping everyone connected while still at home.



Mary Lou taught elementary school in Bethlehem for many years and always searched for ways to encourage her students to learn.

In the Bethlehem Branch, she has worked for years in the Paperback Fiction Section of Book Fair and has helped wherever she was needed. Mary Lou is an active member of the Paperback II book group, where she serves as secretary. She especially likes the Out to Lunch Bunch

and the good discussions that take place over a meal. She is a member of LV4 All and is active in her church.

Phyllis has been an AAUW Board member as Co-VP of the Program and is actively involved with the Book Fair, where she served as a Section Chair. She has been the head of the BACCHAE wine study group for many years. Phyllis is a Paperback II study group member and attends Out to Lunch Bunch. Before retiring, Phyllis taught Honors English at Liberty High School.

### Outstanding Woman of the Year



AAUW PA and the Bethlehem Branch present Olga Conneen with the AAUW Outstanding Woman of the Year Award for meritorious service to the branch and community. Olga doesn't get a chance to say no when asked to volunteer; she volunteers before she is asked.

Olga has served as Program Vice President, (twice), Book Fair Section Chair, and Book Fair Treasurer, always with new ideas and a "Can Do" attitude. She is Chair of the Communications Committee, assuring us of timely, edited Bylines and overseeing Facebook and the website. Olga is a member of several of our Book Groups and can often be

seen at our programs and activities. As a retired librarian, Olga uses her skills to organize the Children's section for AAUW Book Fair.

#### Board of Directors

#### Executive Team

Finance Officer  
Linda Robbins

#### Vice Presidents - Programs

Kristina Hollingsworth  
Linda Federicco

#### Vice Presidents- Membership

Kathryn Kahler  
Cathy Kotanchik

#### Secretary

Joanne Wagner

#### Coordinators

#### Archivist

Linda Robbins

#### Book Fair

Joan Howe  
Debbie Spinney

#### Communications

Olga Conneen

#### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Catherine Kotanchik

#### FaceBook Administrator

Trisha Moller

#### Newsletter Editor

Ann Brown

#### Public Policy

Joan Howe

#### Scholarship

Marie Boltz  
Cathy Kotanchik

#### Website

Madison Scarfaro

#### Yearbook

Shirley Daluisio



# 62<sup>nd</sup> Book Fair 2024



As we write this article, the financial outcome of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Used Book Fair is unknown. What we do know is that the Book Fair was a success. The Kick-off Meeting was attended by 69 members and community volunteers, including a previous scholarship recipient. Daily volunteers averaged at least 20; husbands of members, members and community volunteers came out in force every day to sort donations, carry donated books into the building, out to the rink and to the recycling dumpster; volunteers filled all needed slots for the sale days; and we are confident we had and will have the help needed to unload and re-load the storage shed.

We are tremendously grateful to *Amy Fields* and *Rita Bergstrom*, co-chairs for the 2022 and 2023 Book Fairs. How they organized and innovated their book fairs gave us a huge boost as we took over this year. In addition, their advice and energy was so appreciated. Thank you!

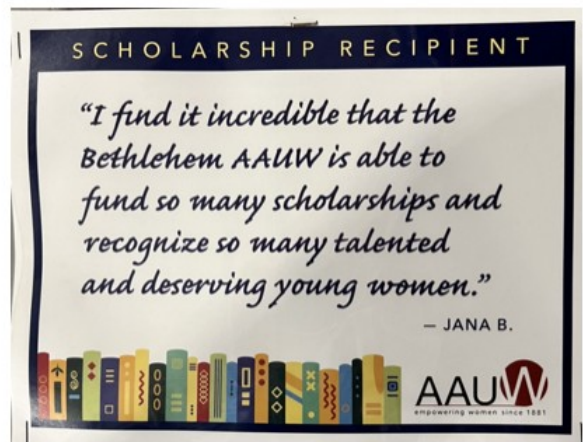
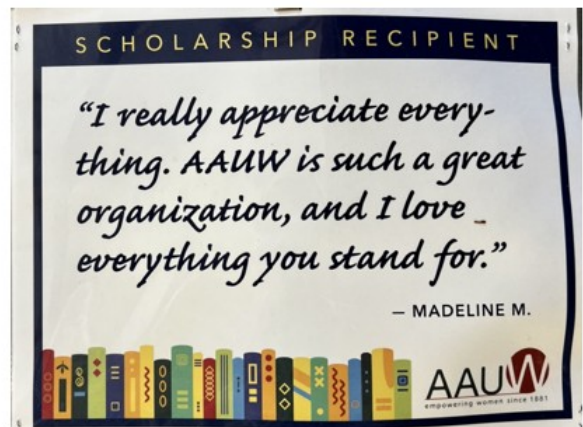
The Book Fair Section Chairs stepped into their duties with enthusiasm and commitment. Don't know who they are? Check the June Bylines.

Kudos to *Ann Brown* for updating the foam boards used by the Section Chairs. A special shout out to *Sandy Freeman* for designing, preparing and installing additional signs that promote the work of AAUW. We hope you spent some time during the sale to read them.

A big "thank you" to the following committee members: Publicity provided by *Claire Ressler* (print), *Trisha Moeller* (Facebook), *Rita Bergstrom* (TV), *Fran Bentkowski* and *Mary Lou Vernon* (bookmarks, flyers) brought us many new volunteers and donations. Our sales team (*Joanne Kelly* and *Myra Jones*) organized cashiers and provided calm during busy sale days. *Shirley Daluisio* contacted and organized the non-profit organizations who came at the end of bag day to take whatever they could use. *Linda Zimmerman* and *Cynthia Weber* researched and priced better books and collectibles. We are incredibly grateful to all of you.

Thank you to all of you! It takes a lot of commitment from many volunteers to make this event happen. Regardless of the funds raised, 2024 was a very successful year.

Joan Howe, Book Fair co-chair  
Debbie Spinney, Book Fair co-chair





## Named Gifted Honorees



The final Named Gift Honorees for the Bethlehem Branch are Cathy Kotanchik and A. Cynthia Weber. Cathy began her AAUW journey by volunteering to serve as Bylines Editor. She quickly lost that job when she agreed to serve as President Elect, with a path to President. As a branch, we were never able to fill these positions again and Cathy stayed on for several years past her term as President. Cathy has worked behind the scenes, filling in as Bylines Editor when needed. She currently is filling an unexpired vacancy as co-chair of membership. One of her passions is attending State Conventions and conferences, where she says she gets energized and enthusiastic about AAUW as well as getting great ideas for the future.

Cynthia came to us from the Allentown Branch and was the catalyst for researching the value of books and initiating on-line sales. She stored and mailed the books for many years, while continuing full time employment. She has served as the Web mistress for AAUW-PA. Cynthia continues to research books at current sales. And she volunteers her husband to chair the Sci-Fi section at Book Fair.



## Honorary Life Status

**Congratulations** to Jane Loupos who has achieved Honorary Life Status and will be exempt from National, State and branch dues.

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs are getting a "bad rap." Last month a new rule was passed by Florida's Board of Education. It blocks the 28 state colleges from using taxpayer funds for DEI programs. The impact will be felt by campus clubs, classes, and other programs, that, according to the board, "categorize individuals based on race or sex for the purpose of differential or preferential treatment." (Please note that this is not only about race, but also about sex.) With many in our country refusing to acknowledge "White (dare I say, Male?)

Supremacy," I want to speak out as an advocate for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Unfortunately, my little voice, from my minimalist pulpit, will have little impact. And that is the reason I joined AAUW. This organization delivers our collective message directly to politicians' ears. AAUW has encouraged me to email my US Senators and Congressional Representative to share our common call for laws and policies that work for the diverse American citizen, regardless of sex or race. Senator Casey, Senator Fetterman, and Representative Wild cannot say they haven't heard my voice. The AAUW Two-Minute Activist is the best two minutes I spend on email. Washington needs to hear from you, too. AAUW gives you the megaphone.  
Cathy Kotanchik  
DEI Officer

## ***Executive Team Report***

### VOTING RESULTS

The Executive Team met on Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, to open and count the ballots received in response to the following resolution:

“RESOLVED: that 20% of the annual net proceeds of the AAUW Used Book Fair (the “Book Fair”) shall be designated for use by the Bethlehem Branch to further its educational purposes. 80% of the annual net proceeds from the Book Fair shall be used for scholarships as determined by the Scholarship Committee. No funds shall be sent to the AAUW National Organization.

The Resolution was accepted. Therefore, the resolution will be added to the AAUW-Bethlehem Policies and Procedures Manual.

Cathy Kotanchik, Co-VP Membership  
April, 2024

## ***Membership Matters : Welcome our New Members***

### **Welcome Janet Baurer**



We welcome Janet Bauer to our AAUW Bethlehem Branch. Janet graduated from Lebanon Valley College in 1977 with a BS in chemistry. She worked for Nestle USA in Alpha, NJ, and retired in 2020. Janet enjoys gardening, dog training, and, of course, reading. She has been a valued volunteer at the Book Fair, and we look forward to meeting her at future programs.

### **Welcome Linda Lipkis**

We are so happy to welcome Linda to our Bethlehem Branch. Linda holds a BA and a Master's degree in English Literature from Lehigh University. She is a longtime member of the Bach Choir and a retired English teacher and librarian at Lehigh University and Moravian College, now Moravian University. Linda loves reading aloud, singing, and walking. She has frequently volunteered at the Book Fair, and we look forward to meeting her at future programs and activities.





## Special Thanks to Linda Robbins



The AAUW Pennsylvania Board thanks Linda Robbins for her many years of service to the state board as well as her branches. Linda has filled many roles on the State Board as District Coordinator, Nominating Chair, Convention Coordinator, and most recently, ten years as the archives Chair.

At the branch level, she served as Finance Officer twice, Diversity Chair, and President for Allentown; and Book Fair Chair and Finance Officer for Bethlehem.

We commend Linda for her three decades of service in leadership roles. We hope she will continue her travels for many years to come. Thank you, Linda.



Empowering for Equity

## PA Conference

I had the pleasure of representing the Bethlehem Branch at the recent AAUW-PA Conference in Harrisburg on April 6<sup>th</sup>. The day's speakers addressed *Women in Politics*, *AAUW Advocacy in Action*, and *The Power of Vulnerability*, the latter being a candid presentation by Gisele Fetterman. Six PA Branches (Carlisle, Erie, Harrisburg, Johnstown, Reading, and State College) celebrated their individual 100+ years of AAUW history in a slide show. I left that evening filled with energy and excitement.

Come experience this excitement for yourself in September at the Atlantic Regional Conference near Richmond, Virginia. (See details to the left.) To encourage members to attend, the Branch will reimburse your conference registration fee. I hope to see you there!

Cathy Kotanchik, Co VP Membership

## SAVE the DATE

### AAUW Atlantic Regional Conference September 27<sup>th</sup>–29<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center  
1000 Virginia Center Pkwy, Glen Allen, VA 23059



#### Hotel Amenities

The Tavern Bar & Grill  
The Glen Restaurant  
Fitness Center  
Free Wifi  
Room Service  
Free parking

#### Nearby Attractions

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden  
James River Cellars Winery  
Richmond National Battlefield Park  
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts  
Children's Museum of Richmond  
Crossings Golf Course



**“Each time a woman stands up for herself,  
without knowing it possibly, without claiming  
it, she stands up for all women.”**

**– Maya Angelou**

## BRANCH STUDY GROUPS

### Information :

**Bacchae:** Bacchae last met on April 11 and tasted and rated two German wines, one white and one red. Germany is noted for its white wines, which are abundant in the stores. But reds are a different story, as we discovered when we tried buying one at a local Fine Wines and Good Spirits store. After tracking down a source at another location (with the help of a kind store employee), we were able to purchase a red wine. We learned that reds, which have had a less than stellar reputation, are becoming more enjoyable and more popular recently. At the meeting we then tasted and highly rated the white Schmitt Sohne Riesling as well as the red Jacoby Dornfelder, both of which come from the Mosel/Rheinhessen region. Our next meeting will be our annual dinner on May 9 at 5:00, tentatively at Tre Scalini in Bethlehem. Any questions? Contact Phyllis Wargo

**Mystery Paperback:** On Tuesday, May 28th, Mystery Group members will be carpooling to Olga Conneen's home where she will host the meeting. Mary Dawson will lead the discussion of Barbara Nadel's *A Knife to the Heart*. We will meet at 1:00pm. Please RSVP Olga about attendance and carpool arrangements. (address: 119 Pine Top Trail, Bethlehem, PA 18017;

**Paperback I:** Paperback I will meet on Tuesday, May 28 at 1:00 in the home of Froy Thompson. New Members will be warmly welcomed. Please contact Mardi Metzger. We will discuss the book, *Yellow Bird: Oil, Murder, and a Woman's Search for Justice in Indian Country* by Sierra Crane Murdoch. This Pulitzer Prize Finalist is a true story of murder on an Indian reservation. Lissa Yellow Bird was released from prison in 2009. When she got home, she found the reservation in North Dakota totally changed by the Bakken Oil Boom.

**Paperback II:** At the April 16 meeting of Paperback II, the author Anne Supsic was the reviewer for her book called *The Bookmark*. It centers around General Lafayette as he recovers from an injury during the Revolutionary War here in Bethlehem, as well as current times here in our own city of Bethlehem. I found it such fun to read a book that mentions both Heckewelder Place and Musikfest! Our book choice for the May 21 meeting is *The Paris Library* by Janet Skeslien Charles. Phyllis Wargo is the host and the reviewer is Rita Bergstrom.

**Public Policy :** Public Policy did not meet in April. Our focus is on the upcoming elections . Public Policy Study Group is focusing on Women's Reproductive Rights for the 2024 election cycle.

**Out to Lunch Bunch:** OTLB met at Clubhouse Grill at Bethlehem Golf course for laughter and relaxation following a morning of work at the Book Fair. Think about joining us at our next gathering on May 8. More information coming and if interested contact Joan Howe to reserve your spot.

**Hot Topics :** Our next meeting will be May 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 at BAPL. Our topic will be local book bans/censorship. We will discuss the Northampton and Nazareth problems. If you've been attending school board meetings, please be prepared to tell us all about your experience. If you know others in the area, please let me know. I will send information to the group soon about the N & N problems. We will discuss plans for the next year and how to move forward with the group. Randi Blauth



## Out to Lunch

We had an extremely large group...and lively! Never a lack of conversation with drinks and good food. What you see in the photos is a group of very tired, but happy workers from Book Fair gathering for some relaxation and laughter at the Clubhouse Grill at the Bethlehem Golf Course.



**Photo 1** from left: Ginny Delph, Debbie Matz (just her eyeball!), Myra Jones, Linda Frederico, Peggy Tyson, Louise Wisser, Susan Seidel, Mary Dawson, Kathy Kahler, Kristina Hollingsworth, Ginny Stanglein.



**Photo 2** from left: Nan Faust, Debbie Spinney, Marylou Vernon (and her show and tell), Jeanne Eroh, Fran Bentkowski, Joan Howe, Jane Williams, Cynthia Weber, Nancy Konn.

### Public Policy Focus

Public Policy Study Group is focusing on Women's Reproductive Rights for the 2024 election cycle. With the slogan "Educate and Activate" we hope to keep the topic of reproductive rights front and center. After the primary on April 23rd we will begin to research all the candidates running for President, Senate, Congress, PA Attorney General, Auditor General and Treasure and where they stand on Women's Reproductive Rights!

Joan Howe, Public Policy

### PROGRAM NOTES

The Branch program for May is traditionally our Scholarship Reception. This represents the culmination of a year of hard work by our Book Fair chairs and many volunteers - all working towards the goal of raising money for scholarships. We hope our members will attend the reception to honor the very worthy women who have been selected to receive these scholarships. It is a heart-warming experience to see them continuing their important next chapter.

AAUW BETHLEHEM SCHOLARSHIP DESSERT RECEPTION

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Advent Moravian Church

3730 Jacksonville Rd.

Bethlehem 18017

Program Vice Presidents: Kristina Hollingsworth, Linda Federico



Ann Brown  
1514 Willowbrook Dr.  
Bethlehem, PA 18015