WRITERS’ TEA AND AUCTION
April 26, 2015
Linda Roberts *227-52878 olsen241@aol.com

The pictures below show examples of some of the beautiful items you can “shop for” or donate to our auction! Contact Linda for more information!!! Please see more pictures on page 9.

MCCANN FOUNDATION SUPPORTS BOOKS FOR BABIES
Betty Harrel *462-2141* bharrel28@gmail.com

Leading to Reading is once again on the move! Thanks to a generous donation from the McCann Foundation, Inc., we will be providing a new book to every baby born in Vassar Brothers Medical Center. Recent research has demonstrated the benefits of reading to babies from birth to help them develop sounds, words, a close bond with a parent, and the love of reading. “Books for Babies,” the newest outgrowth of Leading to Reading, was developed to enhance early literacy in our area. Each year, approximately 2400 baby books will be distributed.

The initiative has been spearheaded by Linda Roy, Shirley Granda and Janna Whearty and will begin shortly. The baby reading packets, which include a board book and parent information, have been assembled recently by members. The first books will be delivered to the hospital in early January. The Foundation’s support is greatly appreciated!

VASSAR HAITI PROJECT
A Student’s Perspective

January 8, 2015
7:00 pm
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Hall
67 South Randolph Ave., Poughkeepsie.

Vassar Haiti Project (VHP) student volunteers Sahara Pradhan ’15 and Robyn Yzelman ’15 with Co-founder Lila Meade will be presenting the various facets of VHP’s work.

The presenters will share their own experiences in VHP and its impact on the students as well as the ways in which VHP is engaged in the local Poughkeepsie community.

The program will discuss the four initiatives in Haiti:
1) Education
2) Health
3) Water and Reforestation and
4) Women’s Co-operative, with an emphasis on the Women’s Co-op, VHP’s newest initiative.

A short video will be shown and be open to questions and curiosities.

The evening will conclude with a discussion of ways in which VHP and AAUW can work together and potential avenues for collaboration.

See page 5 VASSAR HAITI PROJECT
3 Board Meeting: 11:00 am
Brunch meeting at Barbara Van Itallie’s home
17 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie

3 Trekkers: 9:00 am
Annual Planning Meeting
Hostess: Karen Haynes (297-5700)
Coordinator: Karen Haynes (297-5700)

5 Word Games: 2:00 pm
Hostess: Sue Doyle (914/474-1232)
Coordinator: Ellie Charwat (462-7061)

6 World Travelers: 7:00 pm
Presentation: Lapland, Norway and Finland
Presenter: Bonnie Auchincloss
Hostess: Barbara Van Itallie
Reservations: Jeanette Cantwell (452-4188)
AAUWtravelers@gmail.com

7 The Ediss Book Group: 7:00 pm
Book: Little Failure by Gary Shteyngart
Hostess: Gabriela Drasny (471-5406)
Coordinator: Celia Serotsky (473-8426)

8 General Membership Meeting: 7:00 pm
All members are invited and encouraged to attend – see details on page 1.

9 Daytime Literature: 10:00 am
Book: George Washington’s Secret Six by Brian Kilmeede:
The Manor at Woodside, 168 Academy, Pok.
Coordinators: Diana Gleeson (229-8458) & Jackie Prusak (226-6049)

10 Bridge 3: 10:00 am
Hostess: Mary Lou Davis (223-5544)
Coordinator: Donna Reichner dlr0804@verizon.net

10 "The Branch" deadline for February

12 All those books...: 2:30 pm
Book: Snow Country by Yasunari Kawabata
Hostess: Carol Loizides (452-3208)
Coordinator: Carol Loizides (452-3208)

13 Movie Night: Time TBD by show
Movie: Group members will be notified the Thursday before - sign up with Sue.
Discussion: Everready Diner, Rt. 9, Hyde Park
Director: Susan Osterhoudt (889-4469)
Producer: Diana Gleeson

15 Aventures en Soleil: 12:00 pm
Planning Meeting
Poughkeepsie Galleria Community Room
Contact: Ruth Sheets (473-6202)
Coordinator: Ruth Sheets (473-6202)

16 Poetry & Play Reading: 2:30 pm
Bring a poem for discussion
Hostess: Carol Loizides (452-3208)
Coordinators: Jackie Sweeney (518/947-6682) & Carol Loizides e.loizides@verizon.net

19 Manderley Literary Society: 7:30 pm
Book: The Orphan Train by Christina B. Kline
Hostess: Jackie Klein (485-6530)
Coordinator: Rochelle Friedman (462-4996)

20 Cuisine: 6:30 pm
Caterina Medici Restaurant, CIA
Contact: Mary Lou Davis (223-5544)
maryloudavis125@gmail.com
Coordinator: Barbara Lemberger
brlemberger@yahoo.com

21 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Hostess: Mary Ann Ryan (897-9679)
Coordinators: Linda Ronayne (897-9745) & Mary Ann Ryan (897-9679)

21 Gourmet: Out & About: 6:30 pm
J. Dominic’s, 779 Dutchess Turnpike, Poughkeepsie
Contact: Kay Saderholm (229-8545)
Ksaderholm@aol.com

22 Bridge II: 12:00-4:00 pm
Uno Chicago Grill – Lunch ($15)
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn cathy@kinn.org

22 Pins & Needles: 7:00 pm
Tatting Demonstration by Jane Toll
Punch Needle Demonstration by Chris Eidell
Hostess: Celia Serotsky (473-8426)
Coordinators: Arlene Seligman (297-0006) & Jane Toll (463-2712)

23 Art on the Go: Time TBD
Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux (226-8275)

27 Diversity, One Out of Many People: 5:30 pm
Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration: Peace and Diversity
DCC, Bowne Hall, Room 122
Coordinator: Jacqueline Goffe-McNish mcnish@suny dutchess.edu

28 Contemporary Literature: 7:30 pm
Book: The Art Forger by Barbara Shapiro
Hostess: Contact Coordinators
Coordinators: Ann Wade (229-5267) & Linda Freisitzer (266-5427)

28 Mah Jongg: Noon - 4:00 pm
Uno Chicago Grill – Lunch
Contact Blanche blanchebergman@gmail.com by 1/26
Coordinator: Blanche Bergman (462-3955)

Pedal Pushers
Watch for our return on April 8.
Coordinator: Sheila Zweifler sheilaz@optonline.net

LOOKING AHEAD
Mar 21, 2015: The District IV meeting will celebrate
The 200th birthday of Elizabeth C. Stanton
at Fort Montgomery Community College

Apr 16, 2015: AAUW-NYS Convention, Byblos
Niagara Resort and Spa on Grand Island, Buffalo.

April 26, 2015: Writers’ Tea.
June 11, 2015: Annual Dinner, 6:00 – 9:00 pm,
Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Barbara Van Itallie *462-3924* bvanitallie@yahoo.com

**A happy, healthy and peaceful 2015 to us all!**

Speaking of 2015, I am reminded that the year 2000 was 15 years ago already. We thought computers were going to fail and planes fall from the sky. Back in 2000 we used cell phones – some of us anyway - but Tweets and Skype and Facebook were yet to become mainstream. You could bring water on airplanes and “organic” was not yet a marketing term. But what has happened in the last 15 years, of issues of importance to us?

Most recent figures show that a woman earns 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man. In the year 2000 a woman earned 73 cents compared to the man. Yes, moving in the right direction, but still 22 cents to go.

In 2000, the annual workload of Americans outstripped Japan – the former leader of the pack – in hours devoted to work; 82 hours for a dual-earner couple. Today, about 70% of children live in households where all adults work. But between 2000 and 2014, the US has not passed any major federal initiative to help workers accommodate family and work demands. So looking back at gender equality in the workplace, and a woman’s desire to have more choices in her life-work, structural impediments are in her way.

We see that there are some prominent women have gained high level positions in industry, Mary Barra at GM, Marissa Mayer of Yahoo, Sheryl Sandberg of Facebook. These are, to be sure, rare exceptions. And certain occupations continue to be overwhelming oriented towards women. As of 2010, the leading categories of occupations for women were secretaries and administrative assistants, cashiers, nurses, elementary and middle school teachers. Sound familiar?

Yes, the women mentioned lead STEM companies. But a 2011 report by the U.S. Department of Commerce found only one in seven engineers is female. Additionally, women have seen no employment growth in STEM jobs since 2000. Today, women hold only 27 percent of all computer science jobs. Less than 20 percent of bachelor’s degrees in computer science go to women, even though female graduates hold 60 percent of all bachelor’s degrees.

Sexual assault on campus and the military? Whether the numbers are increasing or not, I do not know, but we certainly hear more about it today.

And who would have thought that reproductive rights would still have been an issue in the year 2000, let alone 2015? Yet women’s rights are still being denied, even by our own Supreme Court this year.

Oh yes, back in 2000, Congress had some sense of compromise.

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**A WORD FROM AAUW**

**2014 WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

Maureen Taylor

On Saturday, October 25th, our branch welcomed Maureen Taylor into the esteemed company of our former Women of the Year honorees. The event, held at Ship Lantern Inn, Milton, allowed us to hear first hand from Maureen’s colleagues about her devoted volunteerism. Notably are the founding, with her husband, Richard, of a local chapter of Habitat for Humanity, and her work with the Hopewell Depot Restoration project. Maureen would like our members to know that both of these organizations would welcome you to participate at whatever level you can offer.

Habitat for Humanity of Dutchess County has multiple projects and volunteer opportunities. No experience necessary! They are at 45 Catharine Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601, Phone: (845) 475-9336. [http://hfh-ny-dutchuterra.com](http://hfh-ny-dutchuterra.com)

The Hopewell Depot is open for visitors Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesday from 9 am till 3 pm at 36 Railroad Avenue, Hopewell Depot, NY. You are invited to stop by, view the work that has been accomplished and talk to a volunteer about how you can get involved. [www.hopewelldepot.org](http://www.hopewelldepot.org)

**“HATS OFF”**

Mary Coiteux *226-8275* mcoiteux@frontiernet.net

An expression of admiration for someone's achievement or contribution and our acknowledgment for it.

HATS OFF to the AAUW women who volunteered with “Leading to Reading” to wrap a mountain of holiday presents for children.

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*The Branch* January 2015 Page 3 of 9
On December 12 we held a cooking event for girls in grades 6-12 at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls. We had a total of six stations: kitchen chemistry with Gwen Higgins, a kitchen tour of gadgets and cookbooks with Mary Ann Boylan, a menu planning game with Peggy Kelland; and three other stations led by Girl Scout leaders: decorative vegetable carving, making edible ornaments, and tasting unusual fruits and vegetables plus international recipes. Girls from 12 troops registered for the evening.

A program on room decor is planned for Friday, January 9, at R.C.Ketcham H.S. on Myers Corners Road at 6:30 P.M. Marcine Humphrey and helpers will be leading the girls in three projects, including decoupage. Advance registration and a supply fee of $7 is required.

The Girl Scout Journey "Amaze" for girls in grades 6-8 will be offered January 25 and February 1. Sunday afternoons from 2:00 – 5:00 pm, at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls. This Journey deals with relationship: first impressions, stereotyping, friendship, peer pressure, cliques, and bullying.

We welcome all AAUW members to join us in planning or leading activities, or to just drop in and see what we're doing.
Right to Choose  Left to Lose
Choice is not an epithet exclusive to reproductive rights.
Choice is the tenet of American life. Every day we make many choices: organic, processed or GMO; tap, bottled or sparkling; what to wear or what not to wear; energy sources...go solar?; voting; education; employment; singlehood, marriage or divorce; religion, agnosticism or atheism; democrat, republican, or other; beer or wine or not; singing or dancing or both; bear arms; health options; to shout or to whisper. Our choices run the gamut from personal to religious to social to economic to political and to physical. And with choice, we accept the outcomes, the responsibility of our actions, and evaluate and monitor our choices continually.

Choice: the negotiation between head, heart and conscience that reflects the inner core of what we represent. It is the answer to our intellectual, moral, religious and social debate. Choice is letting our actions speak louder than our words.

Pro choice is not synonymous with pro-abortion. Choice reinforces the inalienable rights of the first constitutional amendment that allows Americans the freedom of speech and expression, religion, the press, and the right to redress grievances. Choice is not only about reproductive rights.
Choice is the ability to chart one’s course in life. Choice: the forefront of American philosophy.

Choice is under attack.
Although attempts by North Dakota and Colorado were defeated, Tennessee passed a constitutional amendment empowering the legislature to enact, amend or repeal state statutes regarding abortion. It is anticipated an ongoing effort to ban abortion and advance the personhood rights fertilized eggs, fetuses and embryos will occur and challenge the civil rights of pregnant women and reproductive freedom of all women.

America is not a theocracy. Church, temple and synagogue and state are separate. America does not have a dress code. Burkas are not required nor are they banned. America does not have a “one child only” population control policy or require licenses and applications for child bearing. Americans may choose to have as many or as few children as desired. There is no forced sterilization. Everyone may pursue education. Americans may select their course of health treatment and make their own decisions. American life is based on freedom of choice.

Americans are entrusted to make personal choices. It seems contradictory that there are people who want to limit the ability to do so. As some states attempt to chip away at Roe v. Wade, it is imperative that choice remain at the core of American conscience. Pro-choice gives all people the right to pursue their life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. You can choose to support choice.

The AAUW Two Minute Activist offers you the opportunity to make your areas of concern known. It doesn’t matter what you choose, just that you choose what is important to you. And it doesn’t have to be the AAUW position because…. you have the right to choose.

The Branch January 2015 Page 5 of 9

VASSAR HAITI PROJECT Continued from page 1

The Vassar Haiti Project (VHP) is a collaborative, all-volunteer 501c(3) non-profit that has, since 2001, worked to foster sustainable development in Chermaitre, a mountain village in Northwest Haiti. Through art auctions and sales in the local community and tri-state area, we directly support the welfare of hundreds of Haitian artists and artisans. These art sales in turn provide our primary means of support for funding education, healthcare, water access and purification, reforestation and women’s initiatives. While supporting Haitian artists and fostering a broader understanding of Haitian society, VHP educates and engages hundreds of Vassar students, local community members, and our Haitian partners in the practices of global citizenship. VHP also mentors and guides student volunteers, providing a platform for professional development and hands-on experience.

From a student's perspective:
Sahara Pradhan, Vassar Class of 2015

Vassar Haiti Project (VHP) is comprised primarily of deeply engaged Vassar students who have made a firm commitment to being about something bigger than ourselves. Student leaders and volunteers take on key roles in the organization, giving us multi-layered experiences in the many facets of VHP’s work. We have the opportunity to develop skills in grant writing, non-profit management, research, coordination of resources, publicity, merchandising, event planning, fundraising, networking and administration. We are also directly involved with communicating with our Haitian partners to co-create and implement projects including building a seven-room primary school, bringing clean water to the village, planting fruit and lumber trees, the establishment and running of a clinic and a newly formed women's initiative.

We also have the opportunity to visit Haiti, a trip that is often pivotal in our time at Vassar. The trip challenges us in profoundly meaningful ways and is very transformative. The trip in March ’12 pushed me to pursue a double Major in Education and Political Science. I was humbled and inspired by the people we met in Haiti as I grappled with the vast global inequalities of our world. A close friend of mine, Sarah Oliver ’15 realized she wanted to become a doctor after her trip to Haiti in March ’12. She returned to Haiti a year and a half later, when the clinic was at its final stages of construction, as a pre-med student, a certified EMS practitioner, and the Director of VHP’s Health Initiative. Another student colleague, Tamsin Chen ’15 pursued a fellowship this summer that allowed her to spend two months doing an internship in Haiti. Every student in leadership at VHP could tell you how it has influenced their lives.

Over the years, we have seen VHP members learn and grow in meaningful ways and we take what we learn in VHP into our careers and our academic pursuits. We are constantly surprised, inspired and challenged by the commitment, compassion, and professionalism of our peers. VHP not only deeply impacts our college lives, but profoundly affects who we are as people and undoubtedly shapes who we will be.
AAUW Honored

*Group Volunteer of the Year*

The Community Family Development Center recently held an awards program to honor their volunteers. A special award was given to AAUW’s Leading to Reading community project. AAUW members have been involved with the center since 2004, providing classroom books, creating reading corners, donating family reading kits, and sponsoring annual celebrations for Children’s Book Week.

In addition to a certificate of appreciation, AAUW was presented with a proclamation from Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney for community service.

Congratulations to the many volunteers who make this program so special.

![Certificate of Achievement]

*Betty Harrel, Sally Taylor, Diane Labenski, CFDC Board President, and Judy Linville*

*Best wishes in 2015!*
RACK CARD
Barbara Van Itallie *462-3924*
{bvanitallie@yahoo.com

Our branch now has a "rack card," a one third-page card that describes our branch and National AAUW. It has brief descriptions of our many and varied activities, our website address and the mission of the organization as a whole. It can be used to introduce AAUW to prospective members or anyone that does not know about us. If you are running any programs for outsiders, belong to any other organizations, or just meet people where you might find this useful, please contact Barbara Van Itallie.

RIBFEST 2014
Sharon Clarke

We raised $481 for Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) in August. I missed the names of two of our wonderful volunteers, Linda and Klaus Beyer, who could be seen collecting admissions at the gate. Please let me know if others were there and not mentioned in the December newsletter. We hope all of you will be back next August to help with this very fun way of assisting a most worthwhile cause.

LET’S DO MATH:
Successful Collaboration between AAUW
Poughkeepsie and Marist College
Zsuzsanna Szabo & Anthula Natsoulas

The Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW Community Outreach Program, Let’s Do Math, represented by AAUW members Dr. Anthula Natsoulas (Professor Emeritus, University of Toledo, OH) and Dr. Zsuzsanna Szabo (Marist College Education Department), completed a successful collaboration in organizing a two-day professional development workshop for teachers: Let’s Read Math.

A diverse group of twenty-two 5th and 6th grades teachers and Marist teacher candidates participated in the workshops hosted and sponsored partially by Marist College on September 27 and November 15, 2014. Dr. Claire Passantino, author of the Let’s Read Math program, worked with local AAUW members to provide in-service workshops on how to use children’s literature to develop mathematical concepts. Co-presenters were Dr. Anthula Natsoulas, Amy Schwed (AAUW and former teacher), and Kathy Barpouls (part time faculty at Marist College and Math teacher in Rhinebeck School District).

The goal of the workshops was to provide teachers with techniques for integrating literacy and mathematics learning. Under the AAUW/STEM umbrella, fifth and sixth grade classroom teachers and teacher candidates from Marist, were guided through the two-day workshop to explore various mathematical topics through reading and related hands-on activities. These topics included: investigation of spatial patterns, tessellations and angle measurements, and ratio and proportion. Teachers received classroom-ready instructional materials and select children’s books. The goal of the program was not only to acquaint teachers with techniques that can effectively be used with girls in mathematics teaching, but also to promote professional development for teachers that could use their knowledge to inspire young girls to follow STEM professions later. The activities were aligned with New York State curriculum guidelines and the Common Core Standards. Teachers and Marist candidates also had the opportunity to showcase their ideas through lesson plans where they used the provided books.

The two-day workshop was a success and we received positive feedback from participants. We are looking forward to future collaborations between AAUW Poughkeepsie and Marist College Education Department.
Marist College undergraduate and graduate education students associations will organize a three-day Scholastic Book fair on the Marist campus between March 24 to 26, 2015 with daily open fair 10:00 am-5:00 pm. The book fair has as its purpose to help new and current teachers to develop their classroom library. We will invite K-8th grade teachers from the area, as well as parents and grandparents and children to browse and purchase their favorite books. We call upon AAUW members to spread the news about the book fair and we are looking for several volunteers who could help and supervise our undergraduate teacher candidates across the three day sale. Volunteers should email Dr. Szabo (Graduate Education Program director) with specific day and block of time the person could volunteer at: zsuzsanna.szabo@marist.edu, or call 845-575-3000 x 2994.

Thank you in advance and we are looking forward to continue our collaboration with AAUW Poughkeepsie!

AAUW WOMEN IN THE LIMELIGHT

Bringing Human Rights Home: Inequality, Race and the United States

On December 10, 2014, the newly formed United Nations Association of Mid-Hudson held its first conference at the Wallace Center. Eleanor Roosevelt Center co-sponsored the event which was held in recognition of Human Rights Day. The theme of the conference was “Bringing Human Rights Home: Inequality, Race and the United States.” Poughkeepsie AAUW’s International Initiative Group were on the organizing committee for the event.

Five AAUW members formed the backbone of the conference.

Geeta Desai opened the conference with remarks titled “Crossroads: The UN, USA and Human Rights.”

This was followed by four morning workshops, three led by members of AAUW. Wendy Maragh Taylor led a workshop “Language and Cultural Competency”; Gwen Higgins’ workshop was “Bias Awareness” and Carmen McGill stepped in at the last minutes and ran a workshop “Beyond Ferguson.

In the afternoon, Christie Van Horne led a discussion on “Race and Health Care.”

For further information on the conference and a copy of Geeta’s remarks, please visit our website www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

Hats Off and congratulations to these very talented members of AAUW.
A welcome to all for the holiday season. Hanukkah has begun and Christmas will soon be here. We had a wonderful branch meeting in December. We enjoyed learning to make new crafts, played new games and partook of delicious refreshments. A thank you to all who helped make the event a success.

Welcome our two newest members:

Catherine Bokor
Sally A. Kemick.

A Happy New Year to all.

Work of our very talented artists

Handwork is always a favorite.

Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc. Officers 2014-2015

President         Barbara Van Itallie         462-3924
Program V.P.      Susie Blecker            462-7074
                    Mary Coiteux              226-8275
Membership V.P.   Kay Saderholm           229-8545
Educ. Foundation V.P.  Linda Roberts          227-5287
Secretary         Katherine Friedman       485-8671
Treasurer         Diane Jablonski         485-6228
Membership Treasurer Jeanette Cantwell       452-4188

Association website: www.aauw.org
NY State website: www.aauw-nys.org
Poughkeepsie Branch website: www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

The Branch is published ten times a year, September through June, by the Poughkeepsie Branch of the AAUW, Inc. Send articles to the editor: Margaret Nijhuis, MargaretNijhuis@gmail.com (635-8612).