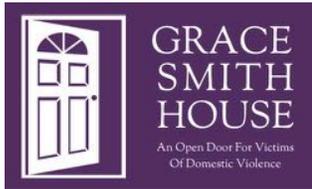


## Gifts for the Mothers at GSH

Since 2014, Poughkeepsie AAUW members have brought gifts for the women at Grace Smith House to our December program meeting. The children who are residing at Grace Smith House, a home for victims of domestic violence, are remembered and

well-provided for with lovely gifts from various community groups at the holidays. **Their mothers, however, also need to feel that the community cares about them and remembers them at holiday time.**



This year we cannot meet in person so this collection will not take place. If you would like to add your individual support, you may want to consider a monetary gift for that purpose so that those managing the shelters can purchase items that would be helpful to the residents.

Checks should be payable to “Grace Smith House” and sent to:

**Attention: Nina Schutzman**  
Development Office  
Grace Smith House  
1 Brookside Avenue  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

*Coming in January*

## Poughkeepsie Mothers Project: Mothers are Creating the Future of the World

**January 14, 2021**  
**7:00 pm by Zoom**

**Presented by Kay Bishop, CNM**  
Founder of the Mothers Project  
and AAUW member

Hear about how the Mothers Project is helping new mothers in Poughkeepsie, and join a panel discussion on the best advice to give to new mothers!



## Join Poughkeepsie AAUW for this delightful December program!

### ART WORK From Creation to Conservation



**December 10, 2020**  
**7 pm on Zoom**

**Presented by Ellen Rand**  
**Rand Atelier, LLC & Monumenta Art Conservation & Finishing, LLC**  
*Learn more at [www.monumentaacf.com](http://www.monumentaacf.com)*

**Registration at [www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org](http://www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org)**  
*Poughkeepsie AAUW members will receive an email with the link to register.*

Ellen Rand will share her non-traditional journey from art school dropout to art foundry employee to owner of Rand Atelier, LLC and co-owner of Monumenta Art Conservation & Finishing, LLC, currently one of the most well-respected firms specializing in the care, conservation and repainting of large outdoor sculptures.

The talk will be illustrated with fascinating treatments of artworks by familiar 20<sup>th</sup> century artists, work trips to interesting locales, and anecdotes and reflections on being a tool-and-machinery-using woman in a male-dominated field.

**Questions:** Sandy Lash 845-227-4650 [sjlash@optonline.net](mailto:sjlash@optonline.net) or  
Marcine Humphrey 845-485-7697 [marcine.humphrey@gmail.com](mailto:marcine.humphrey@gmail.com)

## DECEMBER CALENDAR

Online Calendar at [www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org](http://www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org)  
 Contact: Kathy Friedman [kfriedman33@gmail.com](mailto:kfriedman33@gmail.com)

- 1 **World Travelers:** 7:00 pm on Zoom  
 Adventures in Costa Rica: An intergenerational trip with extended family: grandparents, parents and five hyperactive boys  
 Presenter: Kathy Friedman  
 Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss (635-5191) [bauchincloss@gmail.com](mailto:bauchincloss@gmail.com)
- 2 **Pins & Needles:** 7:00 pm on Zoom  
 Expressing Thanks; Sharing crafts  
 Coordinators: Pat Luczai [pat.luczai@gmail.com](mailto:pat.luczai@gmail.com) and Mary Ann Williams [maryannwms@optonline.net](mailto:maryannwms@optonline.net)
- 2 **Contemporary Literature:** 7:30 pm on Zoom  
 The Girl with Seven Names, by Hyeonseo Lee  
 Coordinators: Ann Wade (229-5267) and Linda Freisitzer (266-5427)
- 3 **Board Meeting:** 7 pm on Zoom
- 7 **Word Games:** 1:30 pm on Zoom  
 Coordinator: Sue Doyle (914-474-1232) [suedoyle1@aol.com](mailto:suedoyle1@aol.com)
- 8 **Seeing White Podcast-Discussion:** 4pm; on Zoom  
 Moderator: Diane Jablonski; 845-834-3378; [dljab@live.com](mailto:dljab@live.com)
- 8 **Reely Together:** 2:00 pm on Zoom  
 Discussion of streamed films.  
 Film selection TBD  
 Coordinator: Jackie Vierno (845-320-6967) [jmv129@optonline.net](mailto:jmv129@optonline.net)
- 10 **Membership program, 7pm on Zoom**
- 10 **Canasta: 1-4 pm**  
 Online Canasta  
**Coordinator: Barbara Cohen** [barbco451@gmail.com](mailto:barbco451@gmail.com)
- 11 **Daytime Literature:** 10 am on Zoom  
 The Giver of Stars, by Jo Jo Moyes  
 Coordinators: Kathy Friedman (485-8671) and Susan Fink (473-3168)
- 14 **All those books...:** 2:30 pm on Zoom  
 Working, by Robert Caro  
 Coordinator: Carol Loizides (452-3208) [e.loizides@verizon.net](mailto:e.loizides@verizon.net)  
 Producer: Ellen Zelig [ellenzeligcrs@aol.com](mailto:ellenzeligcrs@aol.com)
- 15 **Cuisine:**  
 Cookie Exchange – (Logistics to follow)  
 Contact Coordinator: Jo Anne Abraskin [abraskinmomma@yahoo.com](mailto:abraskinmomma@yahoo.com) and Blanche Bergman [blanchebergman@gmail.com](mailto:blanchebergman@gmail.com)

16 **Bridge I:** 1:00 - 4:00 pm  
 Bridgebase.com  
 Coordinator: Linda Ronayne (897-9745) [linronay@gmail.com](mailto:linronay@gmail.com)

21 **Manderley Literary Society:** 7:00 pm on Zoom  
 The Giver of Stars, by Jo Jo Moyes  
 Coordinator: Shelly Friedman (462-4996) [rfriedman5@gmail.com](mailto:rfriedman5@gmail.com)



**Bridge I:**  
 Date TBD  
 Bridgebase.com  
 Coordinator: Linda Ronayne (897-9745) [linronay@gmail.com](mailto:linronay@gmail.com)

**Trekkers 10 am**  
 TBA  
 Coordinator: Tori Smith (345-0043)

No meetings in December for **Bridge II** or **Poetry & Plays**. **Movie Night, Gourmet Out & About, Soleil, Art on the Go, and Mah Jongg** are not meeting at this time of social distancing. **Pedal Pushers** will resume in April.

### Poughkeepsie Branch Officers 2020-2021

President	Monique Jones	849-1692
Program Co-VPs	Sandy Lash	227-4650
	Marcine Humphrey	485-7697
Membership Co-VPs	Mary Scalise-Annis	635-2109
	Sheila Zweifler	462-6478
Development VP	Lula Allen	284-2331
Communications VP	Barbara Durmiak	325-8122
Secretary	Margaret Nijhuis	635-8612
Treasurer	Patricia Luczai	463-4662
Membership Treasurer	Susan Doyle	914-474-1232

Association: [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) NY State: [www.aauw-nys.org](http://www.aauw-nys.org)  
 Poughkeepsie Branch: [www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org](http://www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org)

**Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.**

**Vision: Equity for all.**

**Values: Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.**

AAUW Poughkeepsie values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

The Branch is published ten times a year, September through June, by the Poughkeepsie Branch of the AAUW, Inc. Send articles to the editor: Cyd Averill, 485-2866, [averillc@optonline.net](mailto:averillc@optonline.net)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Monique Jones 849-1692 myj712@aol.com

While recognizing the nonpartisanship of our organization, as an association that advocates for gender equity and the advancement of women in leadership, I feel I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the historic election of the first female



**Vice-President-elect  
Kamala Devi Harris**

Vice President of the United States of America. As we also consider the additional barriers to equity faced by women of color, it is equally momentous that the Vice President-elect is the first Black individual of South Asian descent to hold the second highest office in the country.

I will not suggest that this achievement has moved us into a post-gender or post-racial society (recall the notion put forth following the 2008 election). I will, however, wholeheartedly echo the sentiment I heard when the election results were announced: we have indeed witnessed a crack in the proverbial glass ceiling.

Nevertheless, as a society and, more importantly, as an organization, there is no time to rest on our laurels. As AAUW members, we know we still have work to do. We know, through our collective efforts, that we must ensure that any strides made are sustained and built upon, and that women in all fields – from domestic worker to STEM professional to those running for office - have unfettered access to advancement and the economic security that accompanies such progress.

Notably, AAUW provides a breakdown of women holding leadership positions in various industries, specifically government, academia, and the corporate world: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/barrier-bias/>. The data reveals that as of 2019, the percentage of women holding positions of influence in these areas is well below 50%. This disparity is made even more stark when you consider that women make up almost half of the U.S. labor force and outnumber men in earning bachelor's and master's degrees. As we know, and as Ruth Bader Ginsberg so succinctly stated, "Women belong in all the places where decisions are being made." To that end, AAUW has outlined those barriers that we must continue to counter so women are no longer in the minority when it comes to filling top jobs.

These barriers include: old stereotypes that look unfavorably on women who exhibit leadership traits that are praised when exhibited by men; fewer "connections" which prevent women from learning about advancement and career mentorship opportunities; bias and discrimination; and a lack of flexibility in the workplace which poses a challenge for women trying to balance work and family life. Some of these must be addressed through policy changes and others, at least in part, through inclusion policies and implicit bias training.

I would also suggest that continuing to empower girls to see their potential and believe anything is achievable is a vital component to closing the leadership gap. Breaking down psychological barriers is critical and will serve to change "there's no way I can" to "who says I can't?" As such, for me, this moment just reinforces the valuable work that our branch does – including through Extending Girls' Horizons and the Live Your Dream Girls' Conference – to shape the outlook and future of the young girls in our community.

**"Women belong in all the places where decisions are being made."**

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

## MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Mary Scalise-Annis 635-2109 [nicevalley@aol.com](mailto:nicevalley@aol.com)  
Sheila Zweifler 462-6478 [sheilaz@optonline.net](mailto:sheilaz@optonline.net)

This year, our Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW has added seven new members. New people bring dynamic ideas and add an extra dimension to our organization. It is so gratifying to see women joining our branch even in the midst of a pandemic when our in-person meetings have been cancelled. We want to extend a warm welcome to our newest AAUW member: **Colleen Janicik**. Thank you for joining AAUW during these challenging times.

We are in the process of sending out the Poughkeepsie AAUW Directory 2020-2021. You should receive it by the end of December. It is very hard to predict given the mail. Please be patient. It lists the names, addresses, phone numbers, and emails of all our members. Please check to make sure your contact information is correct. If there is a problem, email Claudette Hennessy at [chennessy@hsysgrp.com](mailto:chennessy@hsysgrp.com). The Directory is a wonderful resource; it contains all of the information stated above and more. Keep it handy so you will always be able to contact members throughout the year.

We want to thank Claudette Hennessy for producing this year's directory. She did a fabulous job and we appreciate her hard work and dedication.

We are looking forward to "seeing" you December 10<sup>th</sup> for our monthly Zoom program. This month it is "Art Work: From Creation to Conservation" presented by Ellen Rand.

Wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy Holiday.

## DEVELOPMENT

Lula Allen 845-284-2331 [lula.h.allen@gmail.com](mailto:lula.h.allen@gmail.com)

NYS AAUW Development VP Carol Griffith urges everyone to make end of year donations to AAUW: Every gift to AAUW makes a difference — but your dollars go furthest when you donate to the [AAUW Greatest Needs Fund or one of the other strategic focus areas](#).

## PUBLIC POLICY

Celia Serotsky 845-702-7381 celiaser@aol.com

You received many communications from me regarding voting information over the past couple of months. And, in true AAUW strong women fashion you voted, whether by absentee ballot, early in-person voting or, as traditional, on Election Day. I'm writing this on Saturday, November 7, 2020, just a few hours after the election has been called. We all have been waiting to see what the Electoral College results would be and for which candidate. It is about the Electoral College that I want to write about here. I thought it might be interesting to review how this body came about and why, and if it needs to be changed.

The delegates to the Constitutional convention of 1787 were very skeptical of allowing the average citizen to vote directly for president. George Mason, a Virginia delegate, thought this would be a recipe for disaster. According to notes from the Convention, Mason was quoted as saying, "it would be as unnatural to refer the choice of a proper character for chief magistrate to the people as it would to refer a trial of colors to a blind man."

Through much discussion and months delay on the issue, a proposal was put forth to have electors choose the president based on the popular vote in each state. James Wilson of Pennsylvania liked the idea of electors meeting in their separate states rather than together in one location. James Wilson of Pennsylvania suggested that the electors would meet in their individual states, and Gouverneur Morris, another delegate, agreed. James Madison's copious notes from the Convention relate Morris's statement, "As the electors would vote at the same time and throughout the U.S. at so great a distance from each other, the great evil cabal was avoided. It would be impossible, also, to corrupt them." The Convention agreed, and so it came to be that our presidents are elected by the Electoral College, and not by popular vote. Each state's number of electors is based on the total number of Senators and Representatives the state has.

I bring up this topic to offer us in AAUW the opportunity to think about and re-examine whether this continues to be the most efficient and fair way to elect our presidents. Who gets elected president does influence women's equity issues and rights. To eliminate the Electoral College outright would require a Constitutional amendment. However, I share with you an interesting proposal that I have recently become aware of. It is called "The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact." [www.nationalpopularvote.com](http://www.nationalpopularvote.com). Following is information I found online:

The **National Popular Vote Interstate Compact** will guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The Compact ensures that *every* vote, in *every* state, will matter in *every* presidential election. The Compact is a state-based approach that preserves the Electoral College, state

control of elections, and the power of the states to control how the President is elected.

The U.S. Constitution (Article II, Section 1) gives the states exclusive control over awarding their electoral votes: "Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors...." The winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes is state law. It is not in the U.S. Constitution. The winner-take-all rule was used by only three states in 1789, and all three repealed it by 1800. It was not until the 11<sup>th</sup> presidential election (1828) that even half the states used winner-take-all laws.

## National Popular Vote!

The National Popular Vote interstate compact

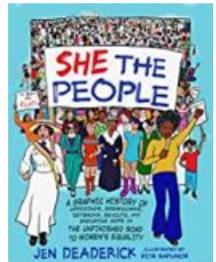
will go into effect when enacted by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes—that is, enough to elect a President (270 of 538). At that time, every voter in the country will acquire a direct vote for a group of at least 270 presidential electors supporting their choice for President. All of this group of 270+ presidential electors will be supporters of the candidate who received the most popular votes in all 50 states and DC – thus making that candidate President.

The National Popular Vote bill has been enacted by 16 jurisdictions possessing 196 electoral votes, including 4 small states (DE, HI, RI, VT), 8 medium-sized states (CO, CT, MD, MA, NJ, NM, OR, WA), 3 big states (CA, IL, NY), and the District of Columbia. The bill will take effect when enacted by states with 74 more electoral votes. The bill has passed at least one chamber in 9 additional states with 88 more electoral votes (AR, AZ, ME, MI, MN, NC, NV, OK, VA). A total of 3,408 state legislators from all 50 states have endorsed it. I welcome your thoughts and opinions on this topic.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: 100 Years of Votes for Women

Barbara Hespeneide, Historian

As we come to the end of the 100th anniversary year of women gaining the right to vote, I recommend [She The People](#) by Jen Deaderick. This graphic novel is an overview of women's history from 1776-2019, featuring "uprisings, breakdowns, setbacks, revolts and enduring hope on the unfinished road to women's equality." I've learned lots in an enjoyable way and I think you will also.



Commemorative stamps are available at the post office to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of women gaining the right to vote.

## LEADING TO READING

Betty Harrel 462-2141  
bharrel28@gmail.com



### Thank you, Arnoff!

For the past few months, Leading to Reading has been looking for new storage and workspace. Our materials have been housed at the Manor at Woodside for a number of years, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were unable to access our materials or work inside the facility.

Arnoff Moving & Storage recently donated a large storage unit at their Route 44 facility and provided movers to help get the materials in place. We'll now be able to start to distribute some of our books to children in the area. The company has supported a number of community agencies, and we appreciate their assistance with our AAUW project!



## MEMBER TO MEMBER

### "Zoom"ing with AAUW in programs, fun, & friendship!

Sue Doyle 914-474-1232

When Covid-19 restrictions caused us to change our daily lives, I had never heard of Zoom, Google chat, or the Facebook messenger video chat function. I felt cut off, isolated, and a bit scared at where it would lead. Maybe some of you have been there as well.

It took a while but with the perseverance of several AAUW friends and some webinars, we were able to resume our Word Games gatherings on Zoom with some creative, critical thinking. People all over the country and the world were using this platform to stay in touch, continue work meetings, transact deals, and many other functions that previously could be done only in person, around a table, on the phone, etc.

Over the months we were able, through cooperation and thinking through the necessary processes, to work out how to play at least 7 different games for our group members who patiently hung on and learned how Zoom could help us stay in contact to keep our minds sharp. We learned heretofore unknown functions like muting ourselves when not speaking, which also keeps out distracting, possibly embarrassing, household noises, screen sharing, and how to be patient, even laughing at how glitchy the app could be while we learned how to work with it. Most recently, we learned how to use the whiteboard drawing function, which added a whole new level of hilarity to the session while we each took turns accessing the whiteboard and displaying our limited artistic talents!

While each of our interest groups and initiatives is different, I applaud our AAUW members for their willingness to learn something new while having fun and continuing the important things we stand for while continuing to stay safe and well. From holding board meetings, listening to speakers, notifying each other about important issues, and generally keeping our friendships vibrant through monthly "BYOL" (bring your own liquid) hour-long chats, our members have made lemonade from lemons, as the saying goes.

I challenge each of you to keep in contact, get busy with something you love about AAUW, and let another member know you are thinking about them. Invite someone you know to join a group and to become a member of our branch of AAUW too. This week! Suggestions are welcome!



### Thanks to Prime Print Shop!

Prime Print Shop, has consistently provided great services for many aspects of our programming.

One facet of the Leading to Reading initiative is Books for Babies, which provides a new book to every baby born at Vassar Brothers Medical Center. After many months, the hospital is again allowing us to deliver the books. Prime Print owner Daniel Clark has once again donated printing for the project. Many thanks to Prime Print Shop for their continued support!

### LTR Receives Holiday Helping Hand Grant

Each year, the United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region (UWDOR) and the Poughkeepsie Journal join together to help make the holiday season happier for many in our community. They solicit donations and distribute grants to community agencies providing special services to those in need. Funds may be used to purchase holiday gifts or food, sponsor parties, or help with utilities.

We are very fortunate that the AAUW Leading to Reading project has again received one of these grants! The funds will be used to purchase multi-ethnic books at the Barnes and Noble bookstore. These books will be distributed to children residing at Hudson River Lodging, the long-term shelter sponsored by Hudson River Housing. We usually are able to wrap gifts there and provide a new book to each child, but COVID-19 restrictions have limited our access to the facility.

Our deepest thanks to UWDOR and those who donated so generously to the Holiday Helping Hand Fund!

### SUPPORTERS OF <sup>THE</sup> BRANCH

Annual contributions from members help defray the expense of publishing *The Branch* and other communication expenses. To add your name, make check payable to: "Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc." and mail to Cyd Averill, 14 Farm View Road, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590. Thank you!

**Patrons** (\$25 or more): Mary Ann Boylan, Ruth Aldrich Gau, Sandra Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis

**Sponsors** (\$10 or more): Mary Ann Ryan