

Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, June 4, 2015  
St. John's Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie, NY

Members present: Betty Harrel, Margaret Nijhuis, Pat DeLeo, Elaine Hofstettr, Mary Coiteux, Christie Van Horne, Marcine Humphrey, Mary Anne Hogarty, Linda Roberts, Mary Lou Davis, Barbara Van Itallie, Maria DeWald, Susie Blecker, Kathy Friedman, Diane Jablonski, Betsy Kopstein-stuts, Eileen Hayden. Guest: Sandy Goldberg.

Barbara Van Itallie called the meeting to order at 7:02. The minutes for May, 2015 were corrected and approved.

**President**

Barbara reported on the scholarship awards presentation at Dutchess Community College. She read a thank you note from Briana Bloomer, one of two recipients of the AAUW scholarships. She also had a thank you note from Pamela Edington, president of DCC.

Barbara announced that Shirley Granda sent a note of resignation from the position of Hospitality Assistant, noting that that position needs to be filled. She commented that the incoming board members are starting the transition into their positions, and thank all the present board members for being part of a successful year.

Mary Lou Davis commented that the state board is looking for candidates for president, program chair, development, and many appointed positions.

Barbara announced that Diane Jablonski is running for Dutchess County Executive. We can support her as individuals, but not as an organization.

**Membership Vice President**

In Kay Saderholm's absence, Susie Blecker, incoming Membership vice president, reported that she is trying to book the Hellenic center for our September meeting. Please let her know the names of any prospective members she should invite to the September Open House.

At the program planning meeting, there was a suggestion concerning the New Members Reception, traditionally done in the hour before the October general meeting. Since our December meeting is more fun and informal, moving the reception to that meeting would be a nice introduction to our members and activities. In discussing this option, the consensus was that it was an attractive idea, but we would like to get our new members involved earlier and that we will have a very good program in October.

**Membership Treasurer**

Mary Ann Hogarty reported that as of today, 239 members have renewed. Many new members have not yet renewed. It was pointed out that the expenses for the Tea, Annual Meeting, and Dues are coming in close together, but that we are not really able to spread out the dates any further. We will send out email reminders for the renewals.

**Program Vice Presidents**

Barbara announced that Mary Coiteux and Susie Blecker are ending their terms of office, and thanked them for a job well done.

**Community Liaison**

Maria DeWald reported that there will be no girls' conference next year because there was a problem with the date. Also some of the workshop leaders were unavailable and there were not enough volunteers. Cecilia Dinio-Durkin will no longer chair the program but Maria hopes the "Live Your Dream 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls' Conference" will be reserved as a branch initiative so that it can be brought back in the future.

Maria presented a chart of the Allocation of the Writers' Tea funds to our initiatives. Items were discussed and one change was made. \$200 was taken from the Educational Opportunities Fund and given to the Legal advocacy fund.

*Maria DeWald moved that we accept the AAUW Tea Allocations as written. The motion passed.*

#### **Treasurer**

Diane Jablonski reported that, while we have budgeted \$28,080 income for dues, only \$9604 in dues has come in. However, she is not concerned since we have lagging dues payments every year at this time.

#### **Interest Group Coordinator**

In the absence of coordinator Cathy Kinn, Barbara reported that there is proposal for a new interest group. The Cuisine group has become too large, and it is difficult to host dinners with so many participants. The proposed group would be named "Nancy's Table" and would be limited to 12 people. In discussion, it was agreed that the Cuisine group is unwieldy and needs to be split in some way. However, the philosophy of our organization stresses that our groups are open to all. This new group seems to be exclusive in nature, as a lot of the members have been chosen already and it will not be open to all. The consensus was to hold off on approval until other options for splitting the group are considered.

#### **Old Business**

Barbara reported that 91 people have signed up for the Annual Dinner Meeting. She may invite the scholarship recipients to the dinner.

#### **New Business**

##### *Changes to the Working Rules*

*Diane Jablonski moved that we delete the last sentence on page 11, Financial – policies, section 3, and replace it with "Expenses that were not included in the budget require prior approval of the Board." The motion passed.*

##### *President's Annual Report*

In her report, Barbara reviewed the goals that the board set last summer and we found that most of these were met to some extent. One goal – to increase attendance at monthly meetings to 100 was not met. However, we felt that our meetings were generally well attended and a goal of 100 may not be ideal, as it would tax our venues.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Friedman  
Secretary

Annual Reports from Board Members are attached.

## Annual Report – President – 2014-2015

***Barbara Van Itallie***

We had a very successful year, due to the hard work of our board members, group leaders and many others.

Thanks to Susie Blecker and Mary Coiteux, our programs were excellent and diverse. In particular, we offered several programs jointly with other organizations, which I believe is helpful to our organization in reaching out to the community with important issues as well as marketing ourselves to the community. These were the program on Women Fighters in ISIS with the World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley, New York State Women in History with the Poughkeepsie Public Library District, and Sexual Abuse on Campus with Shir Hadash Synagogue and the Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church.

Most of our initiatives continue to have successful, on-going programs. Our Leading to Reading program even began a new project, Books for Babies. Diversity, Extending Girls Horizons, Partnership for Healthcare Awareness and Court Watch continue their regular programs not only providing valuable community service but also increasing our visibility in the community. The Live Your Dream Girls' Conference, while holding a successful event this past year, will not continue with a similar program this fall, due to scheduling conflicts and not enough member participation. The Let's Do Math initiative held the Let's Read Math Workshop this past fall but will most likely investigate other types of workshops for the future. Similarly the STEM initiative, while holding a joint workshop with Marist College last fall, is trying to determine what might be possible to continue in the future. Careers, Compensation and You and Women's Personal and Professional Development will not be continuing.

Our interest groups continue to flourish and are a popular part of our branch. These interest groups most likely serve as our best recruiting tool. We added a new interest group this year, Poetry and Plays.

Our annual fund raiser, the Writer's Tea and Auction, was very successful and very well received by the attendees. We raised over \$8500 for our initiatives and scholarships, more money than in the past. We presented two scholarships to students graduating from DCC and continuing their education. The LAF fund raiser, the Rib Fest, also brought in close to \$500. We continue to be in a good financial position.

Our branch was recognized on the State level with many awards, including a Platinum Award for our Leading to Reading program, an Award of Excellence for our newsletter, Awards of Distinction for social media and visibility and several others.

The following are the goals that we discussed last summer and into the year for 2014-2016, where we stand with each, and what has to be done in the coming year:

**Increase funding for scholarships and initiatives to \$8,500:** Made it! Let's try to keep up this level of income for our projects.

**Increase attendance at monthly program meetings to 100:** Rarely did we have this level of attendance at our monthly program meetings; perhaps only at the two on sexual abuse and women fighters and these were joint meetings with other groups. We should continue to discuss this, and even determine if this remains a goal.

**Raise engagement level of current members and bring more members into leadership positions:** About 60 of our members hold some sort of leadership positions, as board or off-board members, events chairs, or initiative or interest group chairs. With particular thanks to the Nominating Committee, this year we brought in people that have previously not served in any position as current and incoming board members, interest

group chairs and an event chair. We encouraged leaders to add new people to their committees and in the future should continue to engage members, particularly newer ones, by asking them to participate in projects.

**Define capacity and what success means:** We continue to be a very successful branch in terms of the number of members that we have. Although members come and go, our membership number has remained fairly stable over the last several years. Members leave us for a variety of reasons, including illness, moving or simply lack of interest. So we all, in whatever our leadership capacity, must continue to make members feel welcome and included. I believe that success also needs to be measured in how we meet some of the other objectives on this list.

**Develop a visibility plan – develop specific goals and how to get there:** We have had some limited success in reaching out to newspapers. Our best attempts at visibility came from our joint programs with other organizations mentioned elsewhere in this report. Our Facebook presence increased significantly. We held a brain-storming session on this topic at the board meeting in November, and should continue to work on this issue, particularly in attempting to get some of our issues published in the newspaper.

**Focus on diversity of membership, programs, age, culture, issues, religion:** I believe that our programs cover diverse topics, and that we probably have diversity of religion in our membership. Although we have women of color in our branch, including some in leadership positions, I do not have a feel for how diverse we are in that area. However we are still an organization primarily of women of retirement or near- retirement age and serve an important purpose for such women. We should continue to work on this issue.

**Include state and national AAUW issues:** Our sexual abuse on campus program was important and well received. We have had a STEM project and have included STEM topics in some of our initiatives. Our Public Policy and International chairs bring issues to our attention. In the coming year I would like to see us continue this effort, particularly with a program on education (i.e. Common Core) at a meeting, a re-examining of our STEM efforts and perhaps more on topics of interest to college-age women.

**Interaction with Colleges:** Our Lets Read Math and STEM projects were joint projects with Marist College. Our talk on women fighters was also a joint project with Vassar College. We hold some of our diversity programs at DCC, held our Girls' conference there, continue to give scholarships there, and have invited their new president to be our annual meeting speaker. At our November board meeting we held a brainstorming session about how to better reach out to colleges. We were not successful in finding a recipient from one of the colleges for the NCCWSL scholarship. We must continue to find members of the college communities who will be our liaison and advise us on the best way to reach college students with our programs and issues.

**Hold Joint Projects with Other Organizations:** As mentioned above, we held several joint projects with community organizations, colleges, a church and synagogue and the library. This helps our visibility so let's continue this whenever we can.

**Next year:** In addition to what is mentioned above, I would like us to determine how we might continue a program for middle-school age girls, if indeed there is a need. Also, I intend to form a committee to investigate ways for us to collect money for dues and events, in addition to only checks. I would like to see the next president identified early in the year, so that she and I might work together for several months.

Please see the individual annual reports for details about these programs and areas. Again, it has been a pleasure working with the board and other leaders, and I look forward to another good year.

## **Educational Opportunities Fund Annual Report 2015**

***Linda Roberts***

\* The Poughkeepsie Branch sent \$2,000 to National AAUW

\* Dutchess Community College Endowment Fund:

The AAUW Fund presently has \$12,000 in it

AAUW Spendable Account has \$3,962.22

including a \$600 check we sent in for one of the scholarships

AAUW Restricted Account has \$348.00

Two scholarships were awarded to DCC students in May

## **Membership Committee Report – 2014-2015**

***Kay Saderholm***

Membership committee activities began during the summer of 2014 with plans for the annual Open House in September. The event was held on Thursday, September 11, 2014, at the Hellenic Center in Poughkeepsie, NY. We welcomed prospective new members who have an opportunity to learn about our organization and to see displays set up by our various Interest Groups and Initiatives which explain the purpose and function of each group.

We welcomed the new members who joined at that time at our October 9 meeting.

Regular responsibilities of the membership committee include greeting and recording attendance at our monthly Branch meetings and preparing mailings of our directory in the autumn and renewal notifications in the spring.

## **2015 End of the Year Report – AAUW Membership Treasurer**

***Jeanette Cantwell***

The Primary responsibility of the Assistant Treasurer is to receive the dues and information related to membership and to process them properly. The second major responsibility is to manage the National Database. These responsibilities and others were met by the following:

I received the annual dues for 2014-2015 from all but 59 members of the Branch from April until November 2014.

I prepared the Branch Dues Report (BDR) in June with 320 renewals, meeting the deadline date and mailing it to AAUW National and AAUW NYS with corresponding checks. I sent additional copies to the Membership VP, the Local Database Manager, the Newsletter Editor, the Interest Group Coordinator, The President, the Treasurer, and I filed a hard copy in the Membership Treasurer's records.

I followed up in July to see that all changes were done properly by National, as I do after every report that I submit to National.

I prepared an Additional Dues Report in August for 24 delinquent renewing members and again in September for 4 more and again in October for 1 more, following the same process as with the BDR.

I prepared a total of 7 reports involving new members with Guest Referral Forms prepared and attached, following the same process as with the BDR. We processed a total of 31 new members for the 2013-2014 campaign.

I maintained a Membership Treasurer's database for incoming renewal dues and new member dues, identifying the amount of money for national, state and local, the member classification and the date received. I maintained a record of all deposits. I maintained an additional database of the changes of member's contact information and other changes. I, promptly, notified National of all changes of member information as they occurred.

December 2, I reviewed the purging of the National Database and found it in excellent order. This continuing improvement has been due to a differently designed process of recording the member's payment of dues that Angela Cooper, at National, and I carefully worked out.

I worked closely and continually with the Local Database Manager to assure that both the Local and National Databases were accurate and identical, forwarding all member applications to her, as they were processed, as well as the member profiles. The Local Database Manager and I had been working on a glitch in the join dates where there were some minor dissimilarities, and a few major ones, with National. We have developed a process to correct the existing dissimilarities, and several safeguards to prevent them from happening in the future.

In March, the Newsletter Editor and I updated the "renewal dues" form for 2014-2015.

On March 16, 2015, I met with Mary Ann Hogarty, to begin a process of training and a transfer of the Membership online database and copies of the paper records. All went smoothly and, on that date, Mary Ann assumed the duties of Membership Treasurer. I have since communicated by phone and e-mail to respond to any help that might be needed to continue proper care of the records.

In April, I assisted the Membership VP in the mailing of the renewal dues forms and continued any information sharing that would be helpful to both the new Membership Treasurer and the new Membership Vice President.

Last year In the month of May I checked the status of our local colleges regarding the AAUW College/University Partnership Program. There were 4 in Dutchess County (Vassar, Marist, Bard, & DCC) and 2 in Ulster (Mt St. Marys and SUNY NP) that currently participate in the program. Only 2 of the CU Representatives belong to our Branch as a member, which is Marist and DCC. We had only 3 e-SAF students collectively from these 6 colleges. They attended Marist and SUNY NP. As of June 1, 2015, we have only one e-SAF student, as the other two graduated in May. In recognition of their loyalty as e-SAF students we are entering them in the "Give a Grad a Gift program, which gives them free membership for one year. These two students should be followed up by the Membership VP to encourage them to continue AAUW membership next year.

I continued to monitor the e-SAF student's eligibility for the collection of their \$3 dues, and speak with them personally for the lack of anyone else picking up this responsibility.

I continued to work on the Membership Committee headed by the Vice President of Membership, working closely with the Vice President to assist in whatever way possible to ensure a smooth operation. I relieved her of all responsibility of collecting applications at the Open House. I formed my own committee to accomplish this, in order to free her committee for other duties.

It has been my pleasure to perform the duties of Membership Treasurer for the last 3 years.

## **Programs for 2014-2015**

***Mary Coiteux and Susie Blecker***

Activities Completed:

Background: In June of 2013 a member driven committee decided on various programs for the next two years. During that time, additional member suggestions were explored as potential programs.

During this season, Susie Blecker and Mary Coiteux

1. Contacted and made arrangements for the speakers including arranging for technical assistance from Mary Ann Boylan.
2. Arranged to rent the Fellowship Hall for another year.
3. Produced press releases, fliers, letters to the editor and membership reminders for each program and made use of our face book page to announce programs
4. Certificates, Honoraria & small gifts of appreciation were made for the speakers
5. Venue preparation included, setting out signs, setting up and take down of chairs, sound system, etc. for each program.

Of special note was arranging for our national speaker Anne Hedgepeth to come to speak at a special April program.

### **2014-2015 Programs:**

October: Latino Community

November: Rural Migrants

December: Fun and Friends Activity night

January: Vassar Haiti Project

February: Understanding the Female Fighter – Women in ISIS; jointly with the World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley

March: Remarkable Women in History; jointly with the Poughkeepsie Public Library District

April: Sexual Abuse on Campus with Anne Hedgepeth; jointly with Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church and Shir Hadash Synagogue

## **Secretary Annual Report 2015**

***Kathy Friedman***

In serving the first year of my two year term, the following tasks were completed.

- Recorded, reviewed, and distributed minutes for each board meeting and the business meetings at the general membership meetings.
- Sent notices the board members regarding board meetings, and requests for agenda items and talking points.
- Provided information to board members monthly including the board agenda, talking points, directions and past minutes.
- Kept the official records of the branch
- Maintained the 501.c.3 notebook and branch seal
- Provided information as needed to other board members from past records.

Comment:

Occasionally I have had to consult the past minutes to clarify the exact wording of a motion, and I have learned that that wording is very important. When a motion is made, it is often repeated by the president or another board member. I believe that the secretary also should take the time to read each motion aloud as written, so that the exact wording can be clear to all.

## Interest Group Coordinator

*Cathy Kinn*

**Goal:** To fully integrate Interest Groups with branch members and the board.

**Objectives:**

1. To be the liaison between the board and Interest Groups.
2. To ensure that group leaders instill within their members the sense of being part of a whole.
3. To ensure that board members respect the work of group leaders and have reasonable expectations of their time and ability.
4. To support group leaders and assist in the formation of new groups.
5. To promote adherence to the branch calendar and to help with time conflicts.

**Completed Activities:**

1. Group leaders were still requested to promote upcoming branch meetings and events. The concept of a “chanteuse” was developed for those leaders who **wanted someone to remind them**.
2. Open House was challenging this year; in spite of my information about what is expected, one new leader decided she had enough members and wouldn’t attend. **Two** other long-term leaders said the same. I **explained** once again that Open House is for informational display, not recruitment.
3. Reminders to make new members welcome and to revisit those who signed up were barely needed. This graciousness is automatic for almost all the leaders.
4. In January, I challenged the leaders about awareness of our branch as a whole and participation in it for themselves and their members. I do think we have made great progress in connectivity among the Interest Groups, the Board and the Branch. It now seems like the “olden days” that a member would not be aware of upcoming activities. Of course, credit for this goes to Margaret Nijhuis as well.
5. Gained one new group: Poetry and Play Readings.

**Still to Come:**

Interest group leaders are steadfast in the time, effort, and care they give their groups. Some are sensitive to any perceived criticism; others take any suggestion and make it exciting and fun. This upcoming year, my last as their coordinator, I will return to praise alone accompanied by a little nudging.

## Community Initiative Liaison

*Maria DeWald*

- The list of Initiative Chairs was edited at the beginning of the year as necessary; there was communication with all leaders regarding updating their Membership Booklet and Website data
- At least monthly communication emails and/or conversations have been sent/conducted with reminders concerning due items such as budget request forms and annual reports, as well as encouragement regarding attendance at AAUW events
- This year we included communication on a Help Wanted Column for seeking Initiative volunteers/support and monthly briefings via short 5 minute informational briefings at monthly membership meetings. The following such reports have occurred:
  - September 11: Ann Pinna on Court Watch
  - October 9: Cecilia Dinio Durkin on Girl's Conference and Kris Puzza on STEM (one at the beginning of the program, the other at the end).
  - November 13: Betty Harrell on Leading To Reading
  - December 11: Peggy Kelland on Extending Girls Horizons
  - January 8: Sheila Zweifler on Annual meeting
  - February 5: Joint meeting with World Affairs/presentation by Barbara VanItallie
  - March 12: Tea/Auction – no program
  - April 28: none since a special meeting was arranged with no Initiative speaker

May 14: Christie Van Horne on International Initiatives; the actual program will also be given by Kay Bishop and Lula Allen on the Healthcare Awareness Initiative

- Developed a report summarizing all funding requests for 2015-16. Served as Community Initiative spokesperson on the Committee to examine these funding requests.
- Some Initiative Chairs have reported themselves or through me at Board meetings and, regardless, they are reminded monthly of the opportunity or the commitment as appropriate.
- Spoke with leaders on sustaining their Initiatives. The following changes have been made for next year:
  - \* Careers, Compensation and You will be eliminated for now
  - \* Girls Conference will not occur next year and is being rethought
  - \* Let's Do Math: Barbara Van Itallie and I met with Anthula to learn more about her concerns regarding the present format. It was determined she would reconfigure this Initiative, hopefully for 2016, but is passionate about continuing a math program in some way.
  - \* STEM: Kris Puzza and I spoke about her programs and we will eventually have a meeting with Barbara and see if this program can be broadened.
  - \* Diversity, Extending Girl's Horizons, International Initiatives, Leading To Reading, Partnership for Healthcare Awareness, Stand Up to Domestic Violence (Court Watch) will continue as always.

## **Diversity Committee Annual Report 2014-15**

*Jacqueline Goffe-McNish*

### Accomplishments:

October 18, 2014	Screening of "Girl Rising"
November 25, 2014	International Holiday Celebration
February 24, 2015	Roundtable discussion for college students

### Summer plans:

June 2015	Trip to Seneca Falls
July 2015	Five day trip to Jamaica

### Challenges:

1. Finding an accessible venue that is free.
2. Communicating with branch members
3. Getting feedback about programs
4. Getting individuals who sign to work actually do work

### Remarks:

Even though all of the events we scheduled were not presented, we had a successful year in comparison to the last three years. I am excited about the last two events for the year and looking forward to a new start in September.

## **STEM Report, 2014-2015**

*Kris Puzza*

She was involved with two STEM projects:

The first involved a partnership with Poughkeepsie "rising freshman", at-risk students from the MS, and the Liberty Partnership at Marist College. Basically it was a mentoring program between Marist students, mostly education majors, to encourage students, boys and girls, in the STEM fields and to give them a taste of college life. The last time this was accomplished was 2 days last summer, **2014**. It did not involve funding, or at least nothing major. No committee was involved as it was based on a previous program (#2 below) but Kris took another IBM volunteer with her.

The time before that was the **Fall of 2012** when the program ran for about 12 sessions, once per week in 3 hour sessions from October through December for the same group of students. There was more of a committee then and AAUW funded it as there was not enough in the Liberty Partnership budget for that. Each MS student was paired with a Marist student mentor. I think the reason that was the last major time was that the Partnership concentrated on ELA skills rather than STEM this past fall.

Also, there has been multiple changes (three) in leadership at Marist and Kris has had difficulty reconnecting. The latest contact there is Charnikia Pinesett. She does want to continue and will fill out the form and ask for funding hoping Liberty will be focusing on STEM issues again. It may or may not be used, sort of like Anthula's.

The second program, which has not been run now for several years, was with VanWyck JHS students, all girls. It ran monthly from October through May. Again, it was a lot of IBM volunteers working with the JHS students on STEM workshops. She initially was involved with this because it was **an IBM program**, she was a volunteer, and her daughter was involved. Then, with IBM's declining staff and, therefore, volunteer force, Van Wyck asked her to take the program over as a volunteer. That is when she tried to get AAUW volunteers to help her instead. However, to top that off, the last TWO years, Van Wyck has not had room for them! She tried asking for twice a year, once each semester, rather than monthly and they still had no room. However, she keeps trying and there is no need for funding really from us but might be for volunteers.

## **AAUW International Initiatives**

***Christie VanHorne***

### **PROJECTS**

#### **1. Program for membership meeting—Report on International Initiatives in Dutchess County May 20, 2015**

The Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW International Women's Initiative focuses on women's rights around the world. We will be implementing ways for our members to be more informed global citizens - a requisite of the times that we live in - and how we might positively affect women's issues in the developing world as well as in the United States. Under the auspices of this initiative, we will maintain a focus on education, health and economic inequalities around the world.

#### **Activities:**

##### **A. Commission on the Status of Women**

On March 13, 2015, eight Poughkeepsie AAUW women: Judy Elkin, Sabashnee Govender, Gwen Higgins, Peggy Kelland, Doris Kelly, Margaret Nijhuis, Erica Salzman-Talbi, and Christie Van Horne caught the 6:15 am train to NYC to attend parallel events for the 59th Commission on the Status of Women. From March 9 – 20, NGO's (non-government organizations) from around the world presented panels and workshops on topics connected to the theme "Beijing +20." The Commission undertook a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

##### **B. International Women's Day**

We continued our involvement with the planning and executing of the celebration of International Women's Day (Saturday, March 7, 2015) culminating in a march over the Walkway over the Hudson.

##### **C. 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 VanHorne led a discussion on "Race and Health Care."

#### **Plans for expansion**

Have a bi-monthly discussion group on international current events on women's issues.

Create action plans based on discussion – petitions, awareness, etc.

## **Executive Board College Representative Report 2014-2015**

AAUW Poughkeepsie Annual Report

### ***Elaine Hofstetter***

The college representative position to the executive board was newly established this year. Since there was no established job description, I first found out the names of the college representatives of our partner schools. I then wrote an introductory letter to the representatives introducing myself and asking them for ideas and suggestions on future programming that might interest the women on their campus.

I had a lengthy phone conversation with the national or state (I am not sure) AAUW college rep organizer when she was in the area. She was trying to get appointment to visit some of the college reps. She was not very successful and she has not contacted me again.

Additionally, I served on the planning committee for the Anne Hedgepeth presentation. This included contacting all the partner college representatives, local area PTA's, our local NPR radio station, and other groups we thought might find the program of value.

I have continued to send emails to our partner college representatives about upcoming events and ask for their input and assistance in getting the word out to the students on their campus. Unfortunately, I have not found the partner college reps to be very responsive to my emails.

## **Communications Committee**

Newsletter, Website, Technology

### ***Margaret Nijhuis***

#### Goals:

1. To provide communication for organization events and activities
2. To provide a means of organizing and storing membership data

#### Objectives:

1. To publish a newsletter for the months Sept – June
2. To update and maintain the website
3. To keep current a Facebook page
4. To put in place a framework and working rules for AAUW Poughkeepsie Facebook pages
5. To keep database updated
6. To engage more members in the activities of communication
7. To provide training to additional people to work on the newsletter and other computer related activities

#### Members:

1. Mary Ann Boylan – Technology Equipment – handles computer, LCD projector and screen
2. Mary Jo Cottrell – Database Manager – all aspects of the online local database

3. Katherine Freidman – Assistant Newsletter Editor – interest groups, online calendar & mailing newsletters
4. Mary King - Webmaster
5. Margaret Nijhuis – Newsletter Editor & website update
6. Joanne Scolaro – Assistant Communications – emailing & website update

Completed Activities:

1. Newsletter is published Sept – June by Margaret Nijhuis and uploaded to the website. Newsletter is mailed by USPS to about 25 members – this mailing is done by Kathy Friedman. Kathy also collect the information from the interest groups and maintains the online calendar.
2. Email reminders of general meetings and other events are sent several times each month by Margaret Nijhuis and/or Joanne Scolaro. Both Joanne and Margaret keep an updated email list on their personal computers. Mary Jo Cottrell has sent several emails this year when both Joanne and I were out of town. All members whose emails “bounce” are contacted by Margaret to resolve the problem.
3. Membership directory information is checked and prepared by Mary Jo Cottrell and Mary Anne Hogarty. The directory is formatted and published by Margaret Nijhuis and mailed by membership committee in November.
4. Database is updated by Mary Jo Cottrell. Mary Jo and Jeanette Cantwell and now Mary Anne Hogarty have spent many hours keeping the local database and the national database in sync. Information concerning changes of contact information comes from Membership VP and Membership Treasurer and is sent to Mary Jo, Margaret and Joanne.
5. Further work with the Membership Committee involves preparing for the dues mailing. In addition, this year we did a revision of the Member Profile with most of the suggestions coming from Maria DeWald.
6. The website is current, informative and useful to members. The home page of the website is updated each month by Margaret Nijhuis with the current programs and recent programs are summarized and moved down the page. Web pages of any of our groups are updated as information is received. Joanne Scolaro helps with this process.
7. Website maintenance and problems are solved, as they occurred, by Mary & Dave King
8. The Facebook page is beautifully formatted and maintained by Christie VanHorne. Christie is working on the organization of the Facebook pages
9. A projector screen was purchased in the winter by Mary Ann Boylan and a computer was purchased and set up in the spring by Margaret Nijhuis. The LCD Projector continues to have use at many membership meeting plus other meetings such as the AAUW Girl Scout Project: *Extending Girls' Horizons* and several of the World Travelers meetings. Mary Ann Boylan is the contact person for the projector, screen and computer. Mary Ann will be operating the system for the membership meetings. In Mary Ann’s absence Margaret Nijhuis should be contacted.
10. Monthly meeting flyers were prepared by Mary Coiteux for emailing. Other booklets, PowerPoint, and flyers were prepared by the committee.

Activities to be Completed

1. Continue to seek more members to help with databases, the newsletter and other electronic communication activities.
2. Create additional communication positions to balance the workload and provide backup assistance for existing positions.
3. Put in place a framework and working rules for AAUW Poughkeepsie Facebook pages.

## **Public Policy**

***Pat DeLeo***

I spent the year learning as much as I could about public policy positions and how to use resources and the website. My first activity was attending a Gillibrand event where I met members of her staff and Senator Gillibrand. She offered us direct contact with her staff and easy access to policy makers. In September some members volunteered to work on Sean Eldridge's campaign in support of his stance on women's issues. Several issues were pursued on the Two minute activist at the request of Washington. Pins were distributed for Get OUT THE VOTE. I Attended a Teachout Rally and continued to act using The Two minute Activist. In November and December I Called people to vote, utilized the Two Minute Activist, sent Emails to Gibson, Gillibrand, Schumer and posted on FB pages regarding fair pay, education and violence against women. January and February saw continued emails to Gibson, Gillibrand , Schumer, Facebook postings, and use of the activist. AAUW co sponsored lecture Women of Isis at Vassar and it was attended by many members. March saw research on the gender gap. I volunteered at Marist book Fair to aid funding for new teachers. I attempted to organize for Equal Pay Date...unsuccessful!

In April, I attended the AAUW State Convention and made several contacts with state leaders. 4 members attended the Gillibrand press conference for Family Leave Act and later attended an area wide meeting regarding state Family Leave Act. Participated in a meeting with Citizen's Action for NYS Family Leave Act. Meet with Assemblyman Skartados on gender equality and tuition tax credits. Met with state senator Larkin on tuition tax credit. 3 members participated in local rally for support of public education. Several members attended lecture on campus sex assault.

Ten articles were written for the newsletter: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back (reproductive rights); Shouts and Whispers (domestic violence and activism;0); Orchestrating a Comeback (Title IX); the Corporate Closet (Wage discrimination); Right to Choose; Share the Spotlight(supporting women's issues); Ending the Silence (Sexual Harassment); What is Wrong with this Picture (Religious Freedom Act); and a Word to the Wise (STEM). Articles encouraged readers to use the Two Minute Activist for current issues.

## **Publicity Chair**

***Betty Harrel***

The goal this year was to raise AAUW visibility in the community. The focus was on meetings and events which were open to the public and had general community interest.

Articles and press releases were sent regularly to local newspapers, the branch Facebook page, a local magazine, and various media outlets. An Op Ed article was submitted and accepted but was not printed. Information was used from both our website and the national AAUW website and was sent to local community calendars as well.

We regularly had postings in the Poughkeepsie Journal calendar and were able to have a few articles printed in local papers. Most were not printed or had very limited space. In terms of print visibility, it was not a very successful year.

It would seem that our best results are from word of mouth, forming coalitions with groups which will share information with their members, and attending community events with AAUW information.

## **Court Monitoring Initiative Report 2015**

Ann Pinna

As you well know, one of the missions of AAUW is gender equality. In particular, our local branch of AAUW seeks to prevent violence towards women and children and is committed to the fair and thoughtful treatment of victims of domestic violence within the court system.

With this in mind, a court monitoring initiative was established in 2011 by Mary Lou Heisenbuttel whereby interested AAUW members could train to become court monitors. Four years later, AAUW's commitment to the court monitoring initiative is still going strong. Dedicated AAUW members continue to be trained to go into Family Court for the purpose of monitoring cases where women are involved, particularly in cases of domestic violence. The goal of the court monitoring initiative is to make sure that victims of domestic violence are treated fairly and justly and that any egregious systemic concerns involved in the Family Court justice system are exposed and, hopefully, improved.

Last year, training for the monitors was composed of a series of meetings that included attorneys and experts in the field of law and domestic violence as well as meetings devoted to improving one's experience in the courtroom.

This spring, our court monitoring initiative got an additional boost when it was invited to join in a partnership, with The Fund for Modern Courts in NYC. The Fund for Modern Courts is a statewide court reform organization, and, like our own local AAUW branch, is committed to improving the judicial system. The Fund has gone into various courts throughout NYS and has been very successful in improving the administration and quality of justice in NY courts.

Our local branch has accepted this opportunity to collaborate with the Fund for Modern Courts for a limited time of one year. During this time, our local court monitors have received on-going training from The Fund which has supplied monitors with new, more detailed observation forms and will continue to provide speakers throughout the next few months to enhance our monitors' knowledge of the court monitoring process and the judicial system.

Our local branch of court monitors continues to work with the Fund who is assessing the results of all the data collected by our court monitors. The Fund will continue to collect data for a few more months, after which time, they will issue a final report based on their findings and recommendations. The results will then be reported to the judges and other appropriate personnel with the hope of improving some of the concerns in the justice system. The partnership with the Fund for Modern Courts has been a great opportunity for our local branch of monitors to learn more about other courts in NYS and to collaborate with others who have more experience and can offer creative new ideas. Essentially, the Fund for Modern Courts broadens and enriches our knowledge of the court system and helps improve our monitoring process. Hopefully, our mutual goals will serve as an on-going beneficial relationship with the Fund.

Currently, our local branch has 25 volunteers who have signed up to do court monitoring and who go to court at least one time per month to evaluate court proceedings. We are always looking for more volunteers who are willing to dedicate at least one time per month to attending court, filling out necessary forms, and submitting their forms for data entry. The court monitoring initiative stands ready to accept any AAUW member who is looking to make a difference for women who need help.

## **AAUW Healthcare Committee, Final Report 2014-2015**

*Kay Bishop and Lula Allen, Healthcare Committee Co-Chairs*

### PROJECTS

1. Program for membership meeting—Report on Women's Health in Dutchess County, May 14, 2015

2. Poughkeepsie Mother's Group

The Mother's Group provides new mothers in the Poughkeepsie area parenting and health education, social support, and access to local services at this important and vulnerable time in their lives. We meet at the

Family Partnership Center two Wednesdays a month from 4:30pm-6pm. The meeting opens with an art project, followed by discussions of the parenting curriculum, nutrition, women's health, infant care, etc. Healthy snacks are provided and time is set aside for the mothers to socialize and learn from one another.

Poughkeepsie Mother's Group provides:

A familiar face for new mothers: to listen to, acknowledge and help with their problems, Parenting education, and health education, to help them to be the good mothers they want to be. Interaction and support from other mothers, which helps reduce isolation, and increases confidence and self esteem in their job of being a mother.

Information and referrals to the many family and health services available in Poughkeepsie.

We also have support and volunteers from many other community organizations including: HRHC, Dutchess County Healthy Families, Family Services, Cunneen Hackett Arts Center, Americorps, Girl Scouts, and faith based organizations including Vassar Temple, Temple Beth El and St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Poughkeepsie Mother's Group

Twice monthly meeting Wednesdays from 4:30 to 6:00 pm at the Family Partnership Building.

Different programs and fliers: "Mother's Group", "Mom's Café, now "Mom and Baby Evening Out"

Average of 4-8 moms at each meeting, with babies and other children

At each meeting:

Parenting education with discussion, curriculum called Nurturing Parenting, community edition

Art projects : painting, photos, crochet lessons, mobiles, art show, book on Mom's Best Advice

Healthy snacks

Mothers participating in planning and running activities

Time for socializing/social support

Help with the infants and children while they do activities

Provide transportation if needed

Other activities have included:

Speakers from other organizations including: Grace Smith House, PPH, Healthy Families, DOH, Dutchess County Cooperative extension

Stress management

Women's health education

Mother's journals

Collection of Advice for new moms

Pregnant women participating during final weeks of pregnancy for mother's advice

Holiday party

Playgroup

Raffles/incentives

Infant book giveaways

PLANS FOR EXPANSION AND THE UPCOMING YEAR

We have 4-8 participants per meeting, want to increase to between 10-20 per meeting

1. Spanish
2. More fun activities, involving the moms in running them...upcoming plans for "Mom and Baby Evening Out": Manicure Night, Cupcake Decorating, Bingo, Parenting Jeopardy
3. More focused education, for their specific problems, with another volunteer in charge of parenting curriculum...Susan Colodner who works for Astor Early Childhood program
4. More personal attention for their specific problems,with more volunteer help in other areas, I will have time to do this
5. More knowledge for referrals, Randi Chalfin who works for Children's Center at Family Court
6. New program "Mom and Baby Evening Out" is activity once a month; and a planning meeting once a month, in which the moms participate

#### Other Goals

7. Children's Literacy program at each meeting.....help to have homes that are literature rich environments, a book once a month
8. Better access to assistance and referrals.....with a plan for who to send them to and follow up

#### Continuing volunteer needs:

- Volunteers to come to meetings and help hold babies
- Connections to local colleges, interns, etc. for volunteers
- Connections to the Girl Scouts, organize a schedule of help for the meetings
- Grant writer
- Facebook/social media

## **Leading to Reading Community Initiative**

Annual Report June 2015

***Betty Harrel, Project Director***

Leading to Reading was started in 2004 and its scope has continued to grow. With an enthusiastic group of AAUW volunteers, the project completed a very successful year. The goal is to support literacy programs in our area and provide books to children from low and moderate income families.

**Community Partners:** We have provided books and family reading kits to Astor Preschool Programs, Community Family Development Center, Tubman Terrace Afterschool Program, Rural and Migrant Ministry, Catharine Street Community Center, Abilities First, Agribusiness Child Development Center, Book Buddies, AAUW Healthcare Initiative, House of Hope, Vassar Brothers Medical Center, and Hudson River Lodging.

**Donors:** Funding was received from the AAUW Writers' Tea, AAUW-NYS Program Grant, Arlington Teachers' Association, Little Kindness Fund, Central Hudson, TEG Federal Credit Union, Hyde Park Rotary, Stewart's Holiday Match, and the McCann Foundation, Inc. In-kind services were provided by Adams Fairacre Farms, Books For America, Books for Kids, Manor at Woodside, United Way of Dutchess/Orange Region, and Macy's/RIF (Reading is Fundamental) and the Friends of the Poughkeepsie Public Library. Additional grant applications have been submitted to local businesses and foundations.

**Activities:** Throughout the year, work sessions were held to assemble family reading kits and prepare books for giveaways. Community readers provided reading activities monthly in 4 pre-school centers. Gift wrapping was held at Hudson River Lodging, and workshops involved students at the Poughkeepsie Day School and Anderson School. The newest outreach, Books for Babies, started in January 2015 and provided a book for every newborn at Vassar Brothers Medical Center. A Book Week Celebration was held at the Community Family Development Center, an Open House to celebrate our 10 years of service was held at the Manor at Woodside, and monthly articles about the project were placed in The Branch. A presentation was made to the Hyde Park Rotary and contacts were made with other organizations. Members volunteered at the Friends of the Poughkeepsie Public Library book sales and as the registrars at the Writers' Tea.

Over the course of the project, over 18,000 books have been provided to children from low and moderate income families in our region. Leading to Reading has continued to serve as a membership and visibility tool.

## Writers Tea final Report 2015

*Lula Allen and Linda Roberts*

### FINANCIAL RESULTS

---

#### Income:

- |                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| • Registration/Donations | 7,320.00  |
| • Auction/Raffle         | 5,422.00  |
| • Book Sales             | 48.00     |
| • Total                  | 12,790.00 |

Special Events Expenses: Venue; Invitations; Printing; Postage;  
Gifts for Authors.

- |                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| • Total Expenses | 4,042.87 |
|------------------|----------|

Profit 8,747.13

#### Summary

The 2015 Writers Tea was very successful thanks to the members of the Tea Committee, the support of the AAUW membership, and friends. The event raised more money than ever before!

#### Recommendation

The Tea committee will have a wrap meeting in the next week or two to discuss the date and plans for Writers Tea 2016.

## Legal Advocacy Fund

Report to Board for 2015

*Marcine Humphrey*

As of the close of the year (January to December 2014) the Poughkeepsie Branch has donated a total of \$1,074.00 to the Legal Advocacy Fund. This includes Rip Fest volunteers, personal donations, and the proceeds from the basket at Convention, table decoration sales, memorial donations and donations made to the Evvie Currie fund. (LAF in New York State).

Our branch was well represented at the convention. We were 6<sup>th</sup> in total NYS LAF giving and 5<sup>th</sup> in Evvie Currie Giving Circle in 2014. This year we created a "Purse" to auction off at the convention. Our designer purse donated by Maria DeWald and filled with items by Marcine Humphrey brought \$75.00 in the LAF silent auction with individual member donations brought our total donations at convention totaled \$160.00.

We continue to use the "Rib Fest" as our major LAF fundraiser and Sharon Clarke (previous LAF chair) has continued to organize this event for our branch.

- As LAF Chair I worked to coordinate my articles in the Branch with Public Policy Chair since much of the issues/work/research overlaps.
- I have handed out materials about LAF, written articles, and spoken to new members whenever possible. As a board member I attempted to attend as many programs, annual meetings and events as possible to act as an ambassador for our branch.
- I receive the LAF Express and check for updates on cases on the national website. I have also reviewed and updated the Branch Website.
- With so many members I think our contribution to LAF should be greater and suggest we consider additional ways of adding to our annual total donation.

It has been a pleasure serving. Nancy Myon, State LAF chair, is a joy to work with.

General suggestion:

I think, with so many new members stepping into leadership positions, we need to have an official board training each year to review the bylaws, working rules, and website. Also, we need to do something to make sure our members read the Newsletter!

## **Report for Live Your Dream 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls' Conference**

***Cecilia Dinio-Durkin***

59 girls attended

Volunteers

AAUW Members – 16

Vassar students – 3

Marist students - 6

DCC students - 6

Non-members/Community - 7

Workshops

1. Fashion Forward
2. Yoga
3. Vassar/Haiti Project/Jewelry Making to Make a Difference
4. Poet Gold: Dream Spoken Word
5. Marist LEAP: Team Building Exercise
6. Debbie St. Onge: Engineering Career/STEAM exercise
7. Grace Smith House: My Campaign
8. Planned Parenthood: My Story

Activity and Activism Tables

1. Decorate Picture Frames for Children's Home of Poughkeepsie
2. Gift Wrap Books – Lead Into Reading
3. Decorate Food Donation Boxes for Family Services
4. Make Cards and Ornaments for Adopt a Soldier
5. Feminist Photo Booth – Girl Up
6. Puberty Packs – Planned Parenthood
7. Who I am Bracelets – Girl Scout Troop
8. Heartfelt Mice – Girl Scout Troop
9. Make a Blanket for a girl out of surgery - Curvy Girls
10. Name the Painting – Vassar Haiti Project

Explanation for Expenses –

Over the years, we've kept the number of people we feed during lunch to under the actual number of people who are present on that day. 1.) because we never really know who will come and so we never know the actual numbers until the day of. 2.) we want to keep costs down, so we under-estimate largely because the caterers were very generous and gave us more food than the girls could eat. But the caterers had noticed that we were under-ordering, so we gave them a more accurate count this year. The 80 person count is still less than the actual number of people who ate lunch. Because we invite the workshop leaders and the girl talk leaders to eat with the girls, thus providing another way for the girls to make a connection and to be inspired, I think it's important to include some of the volunteers in the lunch count.

Craft Supplies – For the past three years, we've enjoyed the donated supplies of craft materials to the conference, but that generosity cannot always be relied on, and this year there was less craft making

supplies donated and more that needed to be bought. We had to replenish the markers, paper, and stickers. We had not bought much of these items in the past two years, and there will not be a need to buy most of them next year.

Our biggest difficulty and time consumption is getting the girls to register for the conference. It is imperative that we have a presence at the parents' nights, that we gain exposure to the parents through the PTA and this year we also tried marketing the conference at the Galleria. I had banners made for these on-site appearances and to use during the conference. This is a one-time cost.

Because even the commitment by the school staff is not enough of a guarantee that students will sign up, we tried radio ads and facebook promotions. I had a school administrator contact me after hearing a radio ad and a parent. Our Facebook promotion yielded more Likes of our page and also two girls to our conference. This was necessary, I felt, because we only had 18 girls signed up at the time of the deadline. Since we extended the deadline, we needed to inform the community of the new date and that could only be done through radio and Facebook, both at very reasonable costs of \$80/radio ad that was matched by the radio station and for \$40 for FB that reached 5,000 viewers.

This year, we also had an intern who was devoted to creating a YouTube video that included girls who attended from Arlington and girls who were going to attend from Poughkeepsie. This gave those schools an incentive to show the video and to heavily promote the conference. The video was also shown during the marketing during various Open Houses and is a strong web presence. In keeping with AAUW's mission of promoting the education of women and girls, we paid the intern \$200 for her efforts in making the video, collecting contact info for the area schools, sending the video and marketing materials to the schools, writing articles about the event and volunteering during the event. Furthering the career of a recent grad is a wonderful bonus community outreach endeavor that I think is well worth the \$200.

I also paid \$103 for the use of the film, Girl Rising. The DVD is available to show our members and to be used in workshops in the future. The members who saw it during a Diversity meeting were informed, inspired and moved. I hope more members will get a chance to see it.

We also incorporated not only hands-on workshops but also activity/activism tables. Girls were able to learn more about an organization and then do some sort of community service, like make a card for a soldier, make a picture frame for a child at the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie, decorate a food donation box for Family Services. These additional activities needed craft supplies, which are an added expense for the Conference.

Unfortunately, the crafts are consumable and so they do need to be replenished. But I the majority of the expenses that we incurred this year are one-time expenditures that will be used for years to come.

**My evaluation:** I was very happy with the outcome of this conference. The girls were engaged from the beginning and from my observation, participated with enthusiasm throughout the day.

During Sara Nowlin's welcome, we showed a short clip with statistics about girls around the world. It mentioned that some girls were being married at a young age and one girl mentioned this statistic in her survey. Two girls mentioned that the movie made them uncomfortable. I see that as a good thing. Even after a day full of information and other activities, there were girls who were still thinking about the message in the Girl Rising film. That means it made an impact. It resonated and it stayed with them.

I not only saw leadership in the 7<sup>th</sup> graders but also the college-aged workshop leaders and the volunteers. Our conference has the unique ability to not only reach junior high school students but also the young women in our community that could potentially be AAUW members.

And for our members, we have a meaningful and worthwhile activity that resonates with so many of us who wish to belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

**Some things for AAUW to consider:** We needed members to volunteer to work directly with a school in order for us to get girls to sign up. Since many schools have the same night for Open House, there needs to be more members that can cover those evenings in order for us to reach as many parents.

Very few members sign up to help with the planning. The majority of the volunteers can only be present on the day of the event. Many more hands/minds/ talents are needed in the planning, preparation and the marketing of the event.

After 9 years, the conference still has a hard time attracting the 100 girls we have always wanted. There is a lot of time and effort, as well as expense that goes into the conferences. Does the board think this is worth pursuing? Marcine had given me all of the information available to help in making the conference happen. Over the past 4 years, she has been there to lend a hand. I hope to do the same for the next LYD committee chair. Is there someone else who would like to take this important and worthwhile project on? If it's helpful, someone interested in taking over can shadow me for next year's conference should you want to continue the program, or they can make the conference their own.

I know that Marcine has a very special place in her heart for LYD as do I. I would love to see it continue.

I just finished doing all the checks I have for the Girls Conference. Total expense so far comes to 2,270.89. Contributions and fees totaled 1631. My understanding is that there is \$2,000 that has been fundraised and set aside for LYD. So, wouldn't the total amount that can be used for the Conference be \$3631? That was my understanding and that's what I thought I could spend in which case, I'm under budget by a great deal! No? ☺

I'm still awaiting reports from various members who had volunteered. I'll let you know what they have to say. All-in-all, it was a wonderful day that the majority of girls would like to do again in the form of a reunion!

**Note:** After this report was written it was decided that the conference would be suspended for 2015.

From Cecilia Dinio-Durkin, June 1, 2015:

Dear Poughkeepsie AAUW Board,

Attached please find school contacts and last year's booklet listing our volunteers and community partners. There is also a sample letter that we've distributed to schools asking for their support. I have gotten several emails about the upcoming girls' conference. I will compile a list of contact info of interested people for future youth-oriented events.

I wasn't able to hold a meeting since there wasn't a day where a consensus could get together, so instead, I met with various LYD volunteers.

After much discussion, with DCC unable to give us the first Sat. in November, the committee decided not to hold the conference this year. There has never been a good time in the Spring to hold even a reunion with so many extra-curricular activities going on, so postponing it would not garner a good turn out.

Briefly, there has been a decline in membership support, the student participation is very difficult to maintain, and several of our key workshops would need to be replaced. It is my opinion that there be a re-working of the Girls' Conference going forward.

As I've said before, I will no longer be able to Chair this activity. I have tried to find someone else to take over, but couldn't find anyone within our membership.

I wanted to thank the Board for entrusting me with this task. Of course, I didn't do it alone and the key AAUW members who originated the program from the start did a wonderful job guiding the conference outcomes each year.

There are wonderful resources that we've accumulated over the years including partnerships with Planned Parenthood, Grace Smith House, etc...and I'm sure they would be available for other youth empowerment programs. And we have plenty of arts and crafts supplies on-hand for AAUW projects/programs.

Thanks to the many members who devoted their time and efforts in making this happen for the past 8 years! The school districts seem to finally be on board and I'm sure they will welcome future collaborations. It was an honor and a privilege to see our organization come together to fulfill our mission and to affect the lives of so many girls in our area.

Marcine has graciously offered to help me inventory the supplies and I'd love to turn them over to the Board next month.

Best always, Cecilia

## **Woman of the Year Committee – Annual Report for 2014-2015**

### ***Pat Luczai***

The Woman of the Year Committee for Fall, 2014 was comprised of: Pat Luczai, chair, Marge Barton, Susie Blecker, Mary Lou Davis, Beth Devine, Judy Linville and Margaret Prescott. Maureen Taylor was honored for her outstanding record of volunteerism. Notable efforts were as a co-founder of Habitat for Humanity of Southern Dutchess and board member of the Hopewell Depot Restoration. The event was held on October 25, 2014 at Ship Lantern Inn and was attended by 51 people.

Total income for the event was \$2200. Expenses amounted to \$2045.48 resulting in a surplus of \$154.52.

Our 2015 committee will again be chaired by Pat Luczai. Committee members are Susie Blecker, Beth Devine, Liz Graham, Barbara Hugo, Judy Linville and Margaret Prescott. Mary Lou Davis has been selected as our 2015 honoree. The planned date for the event is October 17, 2015.