



FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Online Calendar at www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

- 1 Gourmet: Out & About: 6:30 pm**
Il Continori, Wappingers Falls
Contact: Jeanette Cantwell (452-4188)
AAUWgourmet@msn.com
- 4 Aventures en Soleil: 12 noon in NYC**
Metropolitan Museum of Art - private tour
Reservations: Marcine Humphrey (485-7697)
Coordinators: Peggy Lombardi (635-9091)
& Ruth Sheets (473-6202)
- 5 Board Meeting: 9:00 am (note changes)**
Perkins Restaurant, 1576 Rte. 9, Wappingers
- 7 Word Games: 2:00 pm**
Hostess: Eleanor Aronstein (462-6452)
Coordinator: Eleanor Aronstein (462-6452)
- 9 Membership Meeting** - next column
- 10 "The Branch" deadline for March**
- 11 Daytime Literature: 10:00 am**
Book: *The Piano Teacher*
by Janice Y. K. Lee
Hostess: Noreen Rothman (452-2670)
Coordinators: Diana Gleeson (229-8458)
& Tiz Hanson (229-9394)
- 12 Bridge For Beginners: 10:00 am**
Hostess: Linda Roberts (227-5287)
Please response to coordinators (y/n).
Coordinators: Donna Reichner Mintz &
Betsy Vivas (485-2370)
- 12 Trekkers: 9:00 am (snow date 2/19)**
*Highland Rail Trail - meet left side of Stop
and Shop, 2540 South Road.*
Organizer: Pat Luczai (463-4662)
Coordinator: Karen Haynes (297-5700)
- 15 Cuisine: 6:30 pm** Respond by February 1.
Gourmet Vegetarian
Hostess: Betsy Kopstein-Stuts (485-7044)
Bkopstein@hotmail.com
Respond to Betsy who will give recipes.
Coordinators: Betty Olson (889-4836) &
Barbara Van Itallie (462-3924)
- 16 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Hostess: Linda Ronayne (897-9745)
Coordinators: Linda Ronayne (897-9745)
& Mary Ann Ryan (897-9679)

Identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States. In 2008 alone, Americans lost \$48 billion to identity theft and fraud, and every year, nine million Americans are victims.

--according to the Federal Trade Commission.

Identity Theft and Protecting Your Personal Information

Presented by:
**Kim Butwell, AAUW member and
Financial Advisor**



Merrill Lynch Conference Room

2649 South Road (Rte 9) Poughkeepsie

Wednesday, February 9th, 7:00 pm

Come to this free informational seminar and learn about:

- Why you should worry about identity theft
- What defines your "personal information"
- How to spot "phishing" attacks
- What you can do to protect yourself and your family
- What to do if your personal information is stolen

Kim B. Butwell is a Financial Advisor at Merrill Lynch in Poughkeepsie. She has a long-standing commitment to outreach in our community. Before becoming a Financial Advisor she was a consultant to the Dutchess County Office for the Aging focused on helping seniors coordinate their Medicare insurance benefits and heading up the Long Term Care Insurance Education and Outreach Program. Her varied professional background includes working as a Bereavement Counselor at Hospice in Dutchess County, Assistant to a Real Estate Attorney in Millbrook and Director of the Connoisseur Art Gallery in Rhinebeck, NY. Kim received her Master's Degree from Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY and her Bachelor's Degree from The New School in New York City.

Calendar Continued...

Online Calendar at www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

- 17 All those books...:** 7:00 pm
Book: *Invisible Man*
by Ralph Ellison
Hostess: Carol Loizides (452-3208)
Coordinator: Carol Loizides (452-3208)
- 21 Manderley Literary Society:** 7:30 pm
Book: *Let the Great World Spin*
by Colum McCall
Hostess: Betsy Kopstein-Stuts (485-7044)
Coordinator: Ellie Burch (297-7828)
- 23 Contemporary Literature:** 7:30 pm
Book: *The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter & Sweet*
by Jamie Ford
Hostess: Karleen Dorn (223-3904)
Coordinator: Ann Wade (229-5267)
- 23 Art on the Go:** 11:15 am
FLLAC at Vassar - tour - limit 15, lunch at Beechtree
Reservations: Tour or Tour & Lunch, Mary Coiteux
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux (226-8275)
- 23 Mah Jongg:** 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Hostess: Gerry DiPompeii (635-2050)
Coordinator: Amy Schwed (462-2269)
January - March: Gerry DiPompei (635-2050)
- 24 Bridge II:** 1:00 - 3:30 pm
Uno, Brunch, Lesson and Bridge (\$15)
Coordinators: Cathy Kinn cathy@kinn.org &
Janet White (462-6675)
- 24 Pins & Needles:** 7:00 pm
Quilting Continues...
Hostess: Maureen Baran (297-5398)
Coordinators: Arlene Seligman (297-0006) &
Jane Toll (463-2712)
- 26 Professional Women's Networking:** 6:00-10:00 pm
Winter Ball, The Rhinecliff Hotel
Reservations: contact coordinators
Coordinators: Kim Butwell kim_butwell@ml.com &
Jacqueline Goffe-McNish mcnish@sunydutchess.edu
- 26 Trekkers:** 9:00 am
Planning Meeting - Home of Karen Haynes
Hostess: Karen Haynes (297-5700)
Coordinator: Karen Haynes (297-5700)
- Tee Off** *Play will continue in the Spring.*
Coordinators: Dorothy Evangelista (677-9046) &
Linda Ronayne (897-9745)

LOOKING AHEAD

- Mar 8 Centenary Celebration of International Women's Day**, see page 5.
- Mar 9 American Women Diplomats: A Powerful Force**, Ellie Charwat, see page 3
- Mar 11 Reunion "Live Your Dream,"** see page 4
- Apr 10 Writers' Tea**, see page 3, 4
- Apr 15-17 AAUW-NYS Convention**, see page 3
- May 22 AAUW Sunday afternoon concert**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Geeta Desai *297-7589 * geetadesai@optonline.net

In spite of the recent snowstorms, the arctic temperatures, and the inevitable weight gain over the holidays, I find myself beguiled by the possibility of a fresh start. It's the New Year after all and life seems hopeful once again. As AAUW members, it's time to reflect upon the past and draw inspiration from it for the future.

This year our national organization celebrates 130 years of commitment and achievement. This important milestone reflects the AAUW's belief that women and girls can achieve gender equity through education and employment. In fact, no other group of women in history has fought to influence legislation in favor of women and girls for as long as or with as much clarity as the members of the AAUW.

Reflecting on the AAUW's rich history of action and accomplishment has done two things for me. First, it has strengthened my faith in the power of women who are single-mindedly committed to the cause of gender equity and second, it has shown me how I can work towards gender equity on a very personal level in my daily life.

This insight came to me as I delved deeper into the biographies of pioneering members. All of them shared a common philosophy: they believed that providing women with access to education and employment was of paramount importance but that it was equally important for women to strive, to aspire to standards of excellence and to work consistently on personal development. They believed that each woman's initiative and mastery of new skills and experiences were critical components of gender equity. Simply put; working continuously on self-improvement is a time-honored way to get ahead in life. Self-improvement is hardly a novel concept, but it is one that we frequently lose sight of as we wait for legislation to change our lives.

As I reflected on the process of self-improvement, I felt curiously empowered. Yes, it made perfect sense! I could do a number of things to improve myself while I was waiting for my elected officials to sign gender equity into law. I began a list of all the new skills and experiences that I wanted to develop. This was a little difficult at first, because I kept second-guessing myself and wondering if I was on the right path. Finally, I decided that skills that nourished my intellect and outlook were all stepping stones to gender equity. My list keeps growing and now includes: Rediscovering French – reading French novels and joining the Alliance Francaise, Speaking publicly about women's issues, Improving my computer skills, Listening more intently and Practicing patience.

I'm hoping that you will join me in making this the year of self-discovery, renewal and personal development. Happy New Year!

MIA MASK, *DIVAS ON SCREEN*, TO PRESENT AT AAUW TEA

Margaret White *462-8052* mgwhitecsw@aol.com

Mia Mask, Associate Professor of Film at Vassar College and author of *Divas on Screen: Black Women in American Film*, will be one of three authors presenting at our Second Annual Writers' Tea. When asked what motivated her to write this book about the women she profiled, she indicated that she wanted to "bridge the gap" between the "fluffy and non-substantive" write-ups in trade publications and fan magazines and the "historical and overly critical" analysis in current literature. She added that very little is written about women of color in film, and what is written tends to focus on racial stereotypes.



In *Divas*, she has chosen to consider women who represent the journey of African American actresses as they work towards inclusion in mainstream Hollywood films. These women have inspired her and she considers them "sheroes." In writing about the life stories of the women, she admits that there were some "surprises" in the research and looks forward to discussing these revelations at the Tea. The public and critical response to the book has been very positive and has even led to an invitation to serve as a visiting scholar at the University of Pennsylvania during the academic year 2011-2012. Dr. Mask would like to remind readers - as she does her students at Vassar - that women in this book, while celebrities and women of color, share the experiences of "every woman" and that "celebrities are like us."

Dr. Mask received her PhD from New York University. Before coming to Vassar, she held positions at the College of Staten Island-CUNY, the New School University, and was a Multicultural Teaching Fellow at Tufts University.

The courses she teaches at Vassar include African national cinema, African American cinema and feminist film theory, as well as seminars on special topics such as the horror film and cinematic auteurs like Spike Lee. In addition to *Divas*, her many publications include film and festival reviews, essays in academic journals and book chapters. Presently, she is editing an anthology entitled *Black American Cinema Reconsidered*.

Her cultural commentary can be heard on National Public Radio.

Dr. Mask is excited to have this opportunity to share her book with the Dutchess County community at the AAUW Second Annual Writers' Tea.

A book signing will follow the three author presentations.

AMERICAN WOMEN DIPLOMATS: A POWERFUL FORCE

Did you know that until 1972, a woman foreign service officer in the United States had to resign if she got married?

In the forty years since that policy changed, three of our past four Secretaries of State have been women as are 40 percent of our ambassadors.

What have women brought to diplomacy? How does the United States compare to other countries in using women in this vital function?

Come to a presentation on this topic by **AAUW member Ellie Charwat on Wednesday, March 9th at 7 pm at St John's Lutheran Church**. Ellie is the wife of a former foreign service officer, and someone who qualified for the foreign service in her own right. She has spoken on this topic to a Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) audience and to the Arlington Rotary club.

COME TO CONVENTION APRIL 15-17, 2011

Peggy Kelland, AAUW NYS V.P. Program *297-0507*

Join other AAUW members from around New York State at the Glen Cove Mansion for a weekend of inspiration and fun. Keynote speaker AAUW President Carolyn Garfein will be joined by LAF(Legal Advocacy Fund) Program Director Holly Kearn and EOF (Educational Opportunities Fund) recipient Amrita Bahl. The Public Policy Panel will feature two bankruptcy court judges, and workshops will be offered on pay equity, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education, fair trade, women of the American Revolution, and nutrition.

On a lighter note, you'll have the opportunity to take a tour of Teddy Roosevelt's home Sagamore Hill, stroll around the lovely grounds of the Glen Cove Mansion on the EOF Walk, play military bridge, exercise with Zumba, swim in the pool to raise money for Heifer International, and replace those lost calories at the lavish meals, coffee breaks, and President's Reception.

Sunday will be a sharing of AAUW ideas and experiences, starting at the Counterpart Breakfast with State Board members and invited speakers; continuing with the Branch Showcase of successful programs; and concluding with a panel of members who went with official AAUW delegations to Cuba and Israel. The weekend concludes with a relaxing luncheon with old and new friends. See you there!

Registration materials are on the state web site <http://www.aauw-nys.org/convention.htm> and available from your branch president, Geeta Desai.

SAVE THE DATE
WRITER'S TEA
APRIL 10, 2011, 3 - 7 PM

THE POWER OF A CUP OF COFFEE

Pat Luczai, Education Foundation VP,
463-4662 pat.luczai@gmail.com



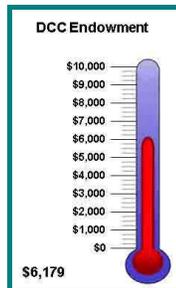
Every year our branch awards two \$500 scholarships to non-traditional DCC graduates who are continuing their educations at a four year institution.

A \$10,000 endowment ensures that one of the scholarships will be awarded each year by DCC in our name regardless of our fund raising efforts in that year, and despite the ability of the interest on the endowment to generate the total amount needed for that year's award.

Once the endowment is established, DCC will fund the \$500 from the interest and make up the difference from its own non-restricted fund raising efforts.

Due to the current economic climate, Dutchess County Community College has made the decision not to raise current tuition. Their current enrollment has grown to over 10,000 students and many of these students will continue their educations elsewhere and be in need of tuition assistance.

How often have you spent over \$3.00 on a latte, cappuccino, low-fat double-shot decaf espresso, or a plain ol' cuppa java? We now have almost 300 members in the Poughkeepsie AAUW branch. Our DCC Endowment fund is over \$6,000. Just think....If every branch member contributed the equivalent of a weekly cappuccino for one month, we would reach our goal of ensuring one of our annual \$500 scholarships!



If you wish to contribute to this worthy endeavor, please mail your check, made out to *Poughkeepsie Branch of the AAUW, Inc.* to our treasurer: **Barbara Van Itallie, 17 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.** Note in the memo line of your check 'DCC Endowment.' Contributions to this fund are fully tax deductible. Thank you!

ATTENTION ALL AAUW ARTISTS AND CRAFTERS!

We'd like to ask all of our talented members to consider donating a piece of their hand-made work for our Silent Auction to be held at the **Writers' Tea on April 10, 2011.**

Please contact:

Linda Roberts olsen241@aol.com 227-5287

Gloria Gibbs gmg24@cornel.edu 454-7262

PUBLIC POLICY

Doris Kelly *229-369* mscw12@aol.com

As noted in last month's Public Policy article, the Paycheck Fairness Act never made it to debate because of a lack of two votes in the US Senate. "What's especially frustrating is that this critical bill became a victim of arcane Senate rules," said Lisa Maatz, AAUW director of public policy and government relations. The bill had passed in the House of Representatives in 2009 with a vote of 256 yea votes and 163 nay votes. Of the 256 members who had voted for the bill, 72 of them will not be part of the 112th Congress.

AAUW will continue their advocacy for issues which affect our mission. In fact, now it is more important than ever to be contacting your representatives and letting them know your concerns.

Civil Rights - AAUW advocates equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse society. The DREAM Act would give undocumented minors the opportunity to earn conditional permanent residency if they complete two years in the military or two years at a four year institution of higher learning. The DREAM Act passed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 216 to 198 in December. 51 of those who voted aye will not be in the 112th Congress. A cloture vote on the DREAM Act failed in the Senate by a vote of 55 to 41.

Economic Security - AAUW advocates for all women to achieve economic self-sufficiency. We are already hearing talk of changes in Social Security and Medicare which could have a devastating affect on women in retirement. The attempt to repeal the Affordable Healthcare Reform Act could lead to a medical crisis for many who benefit from the law. The bill has been titled, 'Repealing the Job-Killing Health Care Law Act.' (Rep. Nan Hayworth is one of the sponsors)

Education - This session of Congress we will see a push for privatization of education. Let your representatives know you support a stronger public education system which promotes gender fairness, equity and diversity.

GIRLS INVITED TO RE-CONNECT

"LIVE YOUR DREAM GIRLS' CONFERENCE" UPDATE

Marcine Humphrey *486-7697* Marcine.humphrey@gmail.com

A "Reunion" will be held on Friday night **March 11, 2011** at the Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church from 5:30 to 8 pm. All of the girls who attended the conference are invited back to re-connect. We have had anywhere from 10 to 30 girls attend the reunions. The event includes planned activities, dinner, and "Girl Talks." Our theme for this reunion is "Calculated Fun."

We are looking for women to set up, register, chaperone, make reminder phone calls, help lead girls in "games" created by Mary Lou Davis and lead "Girl Talks." Please, contact me as soon as possible if you would like to join us. Women who want to "get their feet wet" are invited to assist so they can learn more about the Live Your Dream Girls Conference! We will have one meeting to review the plan with Mary Lou. If you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Cathy Lane, Interest Group Coordinator, *229-1036*

This a series of columns that will give us the news of "What's Happening" in our Interest Groups.

For those of you who wonder what Trekkers is like, I thought that Karen's year end email to us says it all. If you are interested in learning more about Trekkers, Karen's contact information is: kmhaynes1@hotmail.com

Dear Trekkers:

Well our hikes and walks are now over for the year. And what a year it has been! Personally I have really enjoyed the friendships I've made and I always look forward to each Trekkers event and to meeting the "newbies" to the group. Some hikes have been more challenging and adventurous than others, but what better and safer place to be, than with good friends who share your love of hiking and the outdoors.

My friends and experiences are always teaching me new things, and in 2010 I've learned that:

- It's not enough to say that you're meeting at McDonald's on Route 9, since in our county, this will give people only a 1 in 4 chance to find the right one.
- Cemetery walks are peaceful and contemplative and hold decades of local history and colorful stories.
- If you need a restaurant referral, best to ask a Trekker.
- Rail trails don't get plowed or de-iced in the winter. (Hmmm, maybe something we should write our County Executive about).
- The Walkway over the Hudson can be blustery and windy, or hot and sticky, but shows off the river's moods like no other.
- If you need an ice cream parlor referral, best to ask a Trekker.
- Hikes to mountain tops may be more difficult and take longer than when we were younger, but the views they afford us are so much more appreciated and inspiring.
- It's really important to stop and smell the roses, if only just to catch your breath!
- No matter how many times you think you're traveling north, or you say you're traveling north, if you're really traveling south, good friends will just smile and trek on.

Thanks for another FANTASTIC year and wishing you and yours a happy, blessed and safe holiday season.

See you on the trail!
~KAREN~



MY SISTER'S KEEPER (MSK)

Celebration of International Women's Day, March 8

Cecilia Dinio Durkin womensworkbw@yahoo.com

As part of the My Sister's Keeper Initiative, please join us on **March 8** for the **Centenary Celebration of International Women's Day (IWD)**, acknowledging contributions women have made around the world, and an opportunity to educate people about the plight of women in other countries. Under the auspices of the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce (DCRCOC) Women's Leadership Alliance, let's commemorate this day here in the Hudson Valley by joining their **solidarity walk across the Walkway over the Hudson**. The event is open to all women and girls throughout the Hudson Valley, and will be part of Women for Women's celebrations, the only one registered in this area.

Please let us know your interest in walking so that we may register you for the event. The first 500 walkers will also receive a commemorative Fair Trade gift made especially for IWD. At the time of this submission, details were still being finalized, but we'll let you know as soon as we know. To get more info, to join **My Sister's Keeper** and/or to register to walk, please contact Cecilia Dinio Durkin at womensworkbw@yahoo.com (co-chair of MSK Initiative, Poughkeepsie Branch).

OF CULTURAL INTEREST IN FEBRUARY

Margaret Prescott *462-5363* mrp17a@verizon.net

The Howland Chamber Music Circle presents:

The second concert in the three part piano festival 2011 will be presented on **Sunday, February 13 at 4 pm**. Any questions, ticket information, etc. call 845-297-9243.

This is the thirteenth music festival offered by the Howland Chamber Music Festival. With this current 2011 concert series one has a wonderful opportunity to hear good piano music played on a beautiful Steinway B grand piano in the intimate and resonant surroundings of the Howland Center at 477 Main Street in Beacon.

Hoan Pham, 26 year old noted Australian pianist, will present the program. Mr. Pham was born in Vietnam but grew up and now resides in Australia where he won several performance prizes before coming to the United States to study at the Manhattan School of Music.

He will be playing Chopin's 24 Preludes, Bach's English Suite No.6 and Liszt Variations on a theme of Bach. After his August piano recital at the Melbourne Recital Center a critic said "A pianist of deep, rare and exceptional human qualities is worth paying to hear."

Information on the third piano concert scheduled for March 6 will be in the March Branch.

Stay warm. Enjoy all our wonderful cultural activities in the Hudson Valley.

FOUR VICE PRESIDENT POSITIONS OPEN

You are invited to help shape the future of Poughkeepsie AAUW!

Marcine.humphrey@gmail.com

We are seeking nominations for positions on the Board. We need members to lead and to nominate leaders. Some women might not feel they can nominate themselves, but you can! Are you able to organize an event? Would you like to help our communication system grow? Are you willing to reach out to potential members? Do you have good communication skills? Would you like to see our commitment to scholarships for women grow? Do you know someone who, if asked, would consider a leadership position?

When I joined the board in an “appointed” position, I began attending the monthly board meetings. I learned so much about the organization and I met so many intelligent and exciting women. Monthly meetings are working meetings punctuated with laughter and food! I felt inspired by the level of cooperation and collaboration.

As an officer of this organization you will contribute your ideas and help shape this organization’s future! All VP’s are encouraged to communicate with the membership through the newsletter. Their Board responsibilities are to attend meetings, participate on the Executive Committee and support the organization’s strategic plan, and submit brief annual reports.

Positions open: VP Program, VP Membership, VP Communications, and one VP Educational Opportunities Fund. We have not had a VP Communications for a few years, but with a larger membership, we need to improve our communications with our membership and the state. The VP Communication facilitates communications among the Newsletter Editor, Web Page team and Publicity Chair and arranges for updates and reminders to the membership to keep everyone well informed.

We would like to have “co” VP’s to share the work and inspire each other!

Positions were described in detail in the December newsletter (available at www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org select Newsletter on the left). We must have nominations by March to present to the membership. Please, contact Marcine Humphrey (485-7697), Nominating Committee Chair or any committee member: Geeta Desai (297-7589), Gloria Gibbs (454-7262), Barbara Hesperheide (452-3241), Irene Keyes (227-6686), Bergie Lebovitch (298-4045), and Amy Schwed (462-2269)

STAND UP TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Court Watch Project-Stop Domestic Violence

Judy Lombardi *452-7155 ext 16*

The planning for this new AAUW initiative progresses and we are excited to report that we are ready to hold trainings for those of you who expressed interest in this project. The trainings will be held on the following dates and times:

Tuesday, February 22 nd	6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Thursday, February 24 th	3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Tuesday, March 1 st	3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Thursday, March 3 rd	3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Location TBD

The first training will focus on the dynamics of domestic violence. The next two trainings will focus on the details of the criminal and family court systems. The final training will contain specifics about the actual court watch program. Attendance at all four trainings is required for an overall understanding of this project, even if one does not intend to be in the actual courtroom. We will be in touch later when we work out the location of the trainings.

The initial meeting held on this project back in November was well attended by eighteen volunteers who are committed to this project. Since this meeting, we have heard about a few more of you who would like to participate. It is not too late to volunteer. Please call Judy Lombardi at 452-7155 ext 16 if you would like to sign up. Those who attended the meeting in November do not need to call.

CTAUN

Gloria Ghedini *635-1474* gloriaghedini@cs.com

On January 14, 2011, Cecilia Dinio Durkin, Peggy Kelland, Joan Monk, and I attended the CTAUN (**Committee on Teaching About the United Nations**) conference entitled “Achieving the Millennium Development Goals: Teaching for Action.” The keynote speaker was Nicholas Kristof who together with his wife, Sheryl WuDunn, wrote the highly acclaimed “*Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide.*” The AAUW project “My Sister’s Keeper” is based on this book. Another Poughkeepsie AAUW member, Dr. Padmini Murthy, moderated one of the panels regarding health. There was a tremendous amount of information to absorb, but some of the main ideas are the following:

- Education and the empowerment of women are key tools for eliminating the appalling poverty and hunger in the world.
- Women and girls are not the problem; instead they are the solution.
- One way to reduce the birth rate is to educate girls. Educated women spend their money more wisely than men. For example, women will invest in their children’s education and will start small businesses.
- There are incredible returns when girls are brought out of their marginal lives.

I was at first surprised to learn that there are more men in the world but then upon reflection this made sense, considering that in underdeveloped countries sons are sent for medical help unlike

Continued on page 7 ...

CTAUN Continued from page 6 ...

daughters who will subsequently die. Another interesting fact was that sending shipment of food and money won't end hunger, because most hungry people are female food farmers who work extremely hard and yet have no voice. Some suggestions are:

- Mobilize for self-reliance
- Empower women
- Partnerships with local government. The unleashed power of women is the salve.

Dr. Murthy gave the appalling fact that there are more girls in need of a fistula operation than there are gynecologists trained to perform such an operation. One story of great courage involved a 12-year old Ethiopian girl forced to marry a 50-year old man who promptly impregnated her. The baby died upon birth and the young mother developed a fistula condition. She was forced into a hut with doors removed, in order to be killed by hyenas. Instead, this incredible girl took a stick to shoo the hyenas away and then proceeded to crawl to the home of a missionary 30 miles away. Upon a successful operation, her outstanding intelligence was discovered and this incredible girl eventually became a nurse!

LITERARY NOTES

“BREATH, EYES, MEMORY” ... “CREATE DANGEROUSLY” ... EDWIDGE DANTICAT

Diane Browne-Sterdt browruf@yahoo.com

Edwidge Danticat, a Haitian-American, emigrated to Brooklyn at the age of twelve. She joined her parents, who had left her behind in Haiti ten years before. As she made the difficult transition from Creole to English, she told neighbors stories of the violence and dire poverty of her birthplace. She began to write at the age of seven, a child of unusual insight and sorrow for others. She had heard about the writers in Haiti who had been murdered or who had disappeared.

Like many women writers of foreign origin who have had new beginnings in the United States, Edwidge Danticat writes about the struggle to adapt to a new culture, in a new world ... just as Jhumpa Lahiri and Amy Tan, among others, have done. The terrors, the violence, the loss of freedom and integrity ... all inflicted in their country of origin ... are prominent in the powerful, heartrending stories of these writers.

Edwidge Danticat skillfully blends the personal and the political, particularly in “The Dew Breaker,” an outstanding collection of stories within stories. A young woman discovers that her father had been a political torturer. (A New York Times Critic wrote that Danticat here portrays a Haitian truth: “Prisoners all, even the jailors.”) In another fine entry, a Haitian couple, struggle desperately to hold on to their passionate love, only to be driven to silence in an American City that offers them none of the warmth or the joy of Haiti’s playful “carnival” customs and social games. Compassion and insight pervade all of the stories in “The Dew Breaker.” Danticat has also written “Breath, Eyes,

Continued in next column...

LITERARY NOTES continued...

Memory” (her first), about her complex reunion with her mother, as well as “Krik? Krak!” (a National Book Award finalist) and “The Farming of Bones”, an American Book Award winner. She was the editor in 2000 of “The Beacon Best: Great Writing by Men and Women of All Colors and Cultures.”

Edwidge Danticat has just written a series of essays entitled “Create Dangerously.” Now forty, and married with two children, Danticat lives in Florida and travels between the U.S. and Haiti. To quote the *Miami Herald*, her essays emphasize the immigrant’s dilemma: distance and duality. Danticat’s aim is to create dangerously for those who read dangerously (to quote the writer). The horrors of maiming, torture, imprisonment, abject poverty ... and the fortitude that is strengthened through reading and learning about Haiti’s history. All of these make up the themes and the morals in Edwidge Danticat’s gifts to all of us.

Supporters of *The Branch*!!

Annual contributions from members help defray the expense of publishing *The Branch*. All patrons and sponsors are listed in each monthly newsletter unless anonymity is requested.

Patrons (\$25 or more)

Catherine Albanese Lula Allen Mary G. Bagley
Joan Cordani Joan Fay Betty Harrel Irene Keyes
Leola Mason Jean Miller Lila Mitchell Ellenora Oberhofer
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Phyllis Teasdale Mary Louise Van Winkle

Sponsors (\$10 or more)

Marion Efron Ruth Gau Gloria Gibbs
Sandra Goldberg Vicki Greenburg Mildred Jones
Peggy Lombardi Catherine Pété Terry Schneider

Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc. Officers 2010-2011

President	Geeta Desai	297-7589
Program V.P.	Susan Osterhoudt	889-4469
	Diana Gleeson	229-8458
Membership V.P.	Bergie Lebovitch	298-4045
Educ. Foundation V.P.	Patricia Luczai	463-4662
	Trish Prunty	
Secretary	Virginia Marcus	223-5246
Treasurer	Barbara Van Itallie	462-3924
Assistant Treasurer	Elizabeth Moesel	896-9426
Association website: www.aauw.org		
NY State website: www.aauw-nys.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.