

THE POUGHKEEPSIE AAUW BRANCH IS CELEBRATING 90 YEARS!!

You are cordially invited to the



**Annual Meeting and
Officer Installation
Dinner**
with guest speaker
**Dr. Edington,
President of DCC**

Date: Thursday, June 11, 2015
Time: Cash bar: 6:00 pm, Dinner: 6:30 pm
Place: The Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel
40 Civic Center Plaza
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Cost: \$42
Reservations required.

Officers will be elected and installed, named scholarship honorees will be recognized and more.

Make checks payable to: **Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.**
Please mail reservations to:
Sheila Zweifler
8 Van Duzer Drive
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Reservations are due by May 31st, form on page 5.
(No refunds after June 1st).

Please bring a stuffed animal for *Leading to Reading*, see page 5.

MENU

Fresh fruit cup
Garden Salad

Choice of:

Grilled Rib-eye
Chicken Piccata
Sole Francaise
Vegetarian option available

Potato and vegetables

Dessert

Coffee or Tea

Questions: 845-462-6478 or sheilaz@optonline.net .■

Partnership for Healthcare Awareness, an AAUW Poughkeepsie Branch Initiative

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2015

7:00 PM

UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP HALL
67 South Randolph Avenue
Poughkeepsie

AAUW members, **Kay Bishop** and **Christie VanHorne** will provide an update on women's health in Dutchess County.

Join us to hear about trends in maternal and reproductive health, as well as our success with **AAUW's Mothers Group**.

Blue Carreker from Citizen Action of New York, will provide members with information on **The Family Act** and what we can do to make an impact. See page 6 for more on The Family Act. ■



Kay Bishop(4th from left) with members of the Mothers Group

Purpose and Organization of the Mothers Group

The Poughkeepsie Mothers Group is a volunteer run, community supported group that provides education, social support, and access to local services for new mothers in the Poughkeepsie, NY area. The group was started by volunteers from a variety of local organizations who believe that parenting is an important skill that can be learned. New mothers and their babies can derive a lifetime of benefits from the support of other women and mothers during their first year of parenting.

Continued on page 7...

MAY CALENDAR

Online Calendar at www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

Contact: Kathy Friedman kfriedman33@gmail.com

Apr 20 “The Branch” deadline for June.

May 4 **Word Games:** 2:00 pm

Hostess: Linda Lurie (229-9397)

Coordinator: Ellie Charwat (462-7061)

5 **World Travelers:** 7:00 pm

The Marshall Islands

Presenter: Charlotte Mann

Reservations: Jeanette Cantwell (452-4188)

AAUWtravelers@gmail.com

6 **The Ediss Book Group:** 7:00 pm

Book: *The Lowland* by Jhumpa Lahiri

Hostess: Mary Jo Mann (297-9065)

Coordinator: Celia Serotsky (473-8426)

7 **Board Meeting:** 7:00 pm

St. John’s Lutheran Church, Wilbur Blvd., Poughkeepsie

8 **Daytime Literature:** 10:00 am

Book: *The Light between Oceans* by M.L. Stedman

The Manor at Woodside, 168 Academy, Pok.

Coordinators: Diana Gleeson (229-8458) &

Jackie Prusak (226-6049)

9 **Bridge 3:** 10:00 am

Hostess: Patty Ricketts (345-9568)

Coordinator: Donna Reichner dlr0804@verizon.net

9 **Trekkers:** 9:00 am Dutchess Mall Car Pool location

Bear Mountain State Park & Perkins Tower

Leader: Tori Smith (345-0043)

Coordinator: Karen Haynes (297-5700)

11 **All those books...:** 2:30 pm

Book: *The Black Sheep* by Honore de Balzac

Hostess: Cathy Lane (229-1036)

Coordinator: Carol Loizides (452-3208)

12 **Movie Night:** Time TBD by show

Movie: Group members will be notified the Thursday before - sign up with Sue.

Discussion: *Eveready Diner*, Rt. 9, Hyde Park

Director: Susan Osterhoudt (889-4469)

Producer: Diana Gleeson

13 **Pedal Pushers:** 10:00 am

Bike to Highland, 12-14 miles

Meeting point: *Rail Trail parking lot, Old Manchester Rd, behind Page Lumber.*

Coordinator: Sheila Zweifler sheilaz@optonline.net

14 **General Membership Program:** 7:00 pm

All members are invited and encouraged to attend – see details on page 1.

15 **Poetry & Play Readings:** 2:00 pm

Hostess: Mary Lou Davis (223-5544)

Coordinators: Jackie Sweeney &

Carol Loizides e.loizides@verizon.net

18 **Manderley Literary Society:** 7:30 pm

Book: *Me Before You* by Jo Jo Mooyes

Hostess: Lynne Koch (229-9654)

Coordinator: Rochelle Friedman (462-4996)

19 **Cuisine:** 6:30 pm

Tapas

Recipes: Pat Luczai (463-4662) pat.Luczai@gmail.com

Hostess: Sheridan Goldstein (473-3778)

Coordinator: Barbara Lemberger

brlemberger@yahoo.com

20 **Bridge I:** 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Hostess: Linda Ronayne (897-9745)

Coordinators: Linda Ronayne (897-9745) &

Mary Ann Ryan (897-9679)

20 **Gourmet: Out & About:** 6:30 pm

Portofino Ristorante, Staatsburg, NY

Contact: Kay Saderholm (229-8545)

Ksaderholm@aol.com

21 **Aventures en Soleil:**

Edward Hopper House Tour and Walking Tour of

Edward Hopper’s Nyack

Send \$12 check payable to Linda Lurie, 1 Gilbert Drive,

Hyde Park 12538 by **May 10**

Contact: Linda Lurie (229-9397)

Coordinator: Ruth Sheets (473-6202)

22 **Art on the Go:** 11:00 am

Planning Meeting and covered dish lunch

Hostess: Mary Coiteux (226-8275)

Coordinator: Mary Coiteux (226-8275)

23 **Trekkers:** 9:00 am Meet at Dutchess Mall

Dennings Point State Park Hike, Beacon

Leader: Cathy Bala (227-7293)

Coordinator: Karen Haynes (297-5700)

26 **Diversity, One Out of Many People:** 5:30 pm

Cultural Immersion and Preparation for Trip

DCC, Bowne Hall, Room 122

Coordinator: Jacqueline Goffe-McNish

mcnish@sunydutchess.edu

27 **Mah Jongg:** Noon - 4:00 pm

Uno Chicago Grill – Lunch

Contact Blanche by May 25

Coordinator: Blanche Bergman (462-3955)

27 **Contemporary Literature:** 7:30 pm

Book: *Contact Coordinators*

Hostess: *Contact Coordinators*

Coordinators: Ann Wade (229-5267) &

Linda Freisitzer (266-5427)

28 **Bridge II:** 12:00-4:00 pm

Uno Chicago Grill – Lunch (\$15)

Coordinator: Cathy Kinn cathy@kinn.org

28 **Pins & Needles:** 7:00 pm

Planning Meeting

Hostess: Dina Gleeson, 229-8458

Coordinators: Arlene Seligman (297-0006) &

Jane Toll (463-2712)

30 **Trekkers:** 9:00 am Meet at Toys-R-Us

Bring a nature poem or two to share along Ferncliff

Forest & Poet Walk

Leaders: Linda Beyer (462-0345) &

Peggy Kelland (297-0507)

Coordinator: Karen Haynes (297-5700)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Barbara Van Itallie *462-3924*

bvanitallie@yahoo.com

NEW RESEARCH by AAUW

A few months back I wrote that when you join our branch you are joining National AAUW as well, and that National, among other things, does research on topics of importance to all of us. On March 26 they released their latest research study, ***Solving the Equation: Women in Engineering and Computing***. While girls are studying and excelling in math and science, this is not reflected in the number of women in engineering and computing careers. This report addresses some of the reasons why and possible strategies for increasing the number of women in these fields. A few points that I found particularly compelling:

Women have made significant gains in some STEM fields.

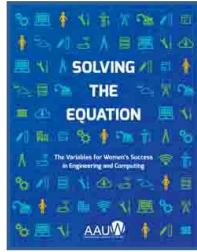
For example, since 1960, women in chemistry rose from 8% of the workforce to 39% and in biology from just over 25% to 50% of the workforce. In computing fields, however, women declined from just over 33% in 1990 to just over a 25% in 2103, about the same as it was in 1960. And engineering has been describes as, "the most sex-segregated nonmilitary profession in the world".

Why does the relatively small numbers of women in these fields matter? From the point of view of business, diversity in the workforce contributes to creativity, productivity and innovation. Women's experiences – and men's – should guide and inform the direction of technical and engineering innovations. From the point of view of the woman worker, engineering and computing occupations account for more that 80 % of the STEM workforce and, therefore, offer better job prospects than other STEM fields.

And why this scarcity of women in these fields, and what can be done about it? Stereotyping and bias exist; for example, one study showed that potential employers underestimated the mathematical ability of women, resulting in the hiring of lower performing men over higher performing women. Another aspect is that women are more likely than men to prioritize helping others over career goals. The report goes on to state that, "Engineering and computing jobs clearly can provide opportunities for fulfilling communal goals, but jobs in these fields are not generally viewed that way." And for solutions, simply attempting to recruit more women into these fields is not particularly successful; it is necessary to change the environment in colleges and the workplace.

These and many other issues are discussed in depth in this most interesting report. To get a copy of the report for yourself, go the AAUW National website. And if you have suggestions for our own branch to address this issue, please let me know.

Editor's note: You may obtain a copy by going to www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org and click on the link under Fast Facts or by typing this link into your browser <http://www.aauw.org/files/2015/03/Solving-the-Equation-report-nsa.pdf>. ■



THANK YOU, JEANETTE

Barbara Van Itallie *462-3924* bvanitallie@yahoo.com

At the meeting of March 12 the board accepted with regret the resignation of Jeanette Cantwell as Membership Treasurer, a position her has held since 2012. The duties of the Membership Treasurer are to collect the dues, to submit membership records to National AAUW and assist in keeping local membership records. Although May and June are our dues renewal months, dues payments for new members are received throughout the year. Jeanette performed these duties with diligence, promptness, accuracy and great attention to detail. Membership retention was very important to Jeanette and she spent many, many hours contacting and talking to members. We thank Jeanette for performing these valuable services to our branch. Jeanette also leads the popular World Travelers interest group.

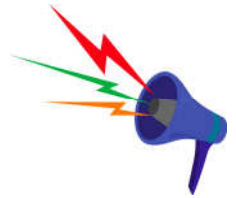
Welcome Mary Anne

We are pleased to report that Mary Anne Hogarty has agreed to take on the Membership Treasurer position for the remainder of the term which ends June 30. She has also agreed to be nominated for Membership Treasurer to fill a one year term. Mary Ann has assisted our data base manager Mary Jo Cottrell in keeping the records of our branch. ■

GET A DEAL ON DUES!!!

Kay Saderholm *229-8545* ksaderholm@aol.com

Come One, Come All!! Hear the news! You will be receiving your dues notice, with envelope for return, in the US mail in the next few days.



And do were have a potential bargain for you! (And what woman doesn't love a bargain?) The Poughkeepsie Branch will be giving away **FIVE (5) free** National memberships, worth \$49.00 each. Here's how you can win one:

Mail your dues by May 11, 2015 and PRINT your name on all three (3) tickets at the bottom of the dues notice for 3 chances to win.

Mail your dues by May 18, 2015 and PRINT your name on two (2) tickets for 2 chances to win.

Mail your dues by May 25, 2015 and PRINT your name on one (1) ticket for one chance.

The drawing will be held at the June 11 Annual Meeting. It's worthwhile to be prompt - if your name is drawn as one of the five winners of a free \$49 national membership, a refund check will be sent to you in the amount of \$49.

Make life easy for those involved in branch membership records – pay before the June 4th deadline.

Please make checks payable to: **Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.** and mail to:

**Mary Anne Hogarty
20 Innsbruck Blvd
Hopewell Junction, NY 12533■**

SUPPORTERS OF THE BRANCH!!

Annual contributions from members help defray the expense of publishing *The Branch* and other communication expenses. 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, Mary Ann Boylan, Sharon Clarke, Patricia DeLeo, Lillian DePasquale, Ruth Gau, Gloria Gibbs, Sandra Goldberg, Elizabeth Harrel, Shaileen Kopec, Catherine Pété, Terry Schneider

Sponsors (\$10 or more)

Marguerite Cotter, Christina Houghtaling, Cathleen Kinn

To add your name to this list of supporters, mail a check payable: **“Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.”** to Margaret Nijhuis, 9 McAllister Drive, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569

“HATS OFF”

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

“Hats Off” to **Didi Barrett** and her husband David for receiving the Eleanor & Franklin Award given by the Dutchess County Democratic Committee.

“Hats Off” to **Cathy Lane** and her husband Ron. They were awarded the 2015 Chairperson’s Award from the Hyde Park Democratic Committee.

“Hats Off” to **Carol Loizides** who had a painting exhibited in “Celebrating Women Artists of the Hudson Valley.”

“Hats Off” to **Wendy Maragh Taylor, Mary Louise Van Winkle, Barbara Mindel, Elise Pattison**, and former AAUW Member, **Rita Alterman** for the outstanding program on March 12, 2015. See www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org for more details.■



Mary Louise Van Winkle



Barbara Mindel Deborah Shorn



Rita Alterman Wendy Maragh Taylor



Elise Pattison

Many thanks to our March Meeting Speakers.

WHAT’S HAPPENING?

Cathy Kinn, Interest Group Coordinator, cathy@kinn.org

Thoughts and Ideas from Cathy and other Interest Group Members, March 19, 2015

There is a problem with my house! We’ve had to cancel because of snow three times, two times for Ediss and today for Poetry and Play Readings.

Any time there’s a meeting you’re really not looking forward to, just arrange it at my address.

I have learned one need not feel like a beggar when asking for Tea donations. Armed with my request Wednesday at Gold’s Gym I asked at the desk if they give donations to non-profit organizations and was told the paperwork would be put in the manager’s box and that he would get back to me. I haven’t heard yet and will follow up, but that was easy.

I hate to give my secret away, but one of the best auction prizes is the Cuisine Dinner. Tuesday night, I arrived *empty-handed* at the Cuisine venue and had one of the best dinners (13 dishes) ever...and one of the most fun!

Be sure to check out the paper certificates/gifts area. Great bargains and fun times are to be found there.

Thanks to Ann Wade for the following:

Our Contemporary Lit group meeting was fruitful and all were interested in AAUW announcements. All were already aware of the events we spoke about (of course having Betty Harrel there is a big help!) On the subject of the auction the group decided to get a readers' basket together. Arlene is contributing the basket and the rest of us will donate books, book marks etc. to make it a little different.

And what a great idea Barbara Lemberger and Cuisine members have:

Each month, they evenly divide their costs and decided to round up the numbers to the next dollar. They decide at the beginning of the year to which initiative the extra money will be given. This has the added bonus of informing their members about our initiatives.

And from Maria Weinberg, AAUW Trekkers, March 20, 2015: *I spent the morning at Soukup Farms and then Madava Farms with Pat Luczai, Linda Beyer, Vivian Rose and Andy Rose where we got a great education on the maple syrup process. First the family business at Soukup farm with more old fashioned methods, then at Madava Farms where all the equipment was state of the art. Fantastic education and we all had a great time. Ended in Dover Plains for lunch at Freshco 22 where everything was fresh and good.■*

56th DUTCHESS COUNTY SCIENCE FAIR Poughkeepsie AAUW Awards

The 56th annual Dutchess County Science Fair was held on Saturday, March 21, 2015, at Dutchess County Community College. There were over 230 student entrants from grades 5 and 12. **Kay Saderholm** and **Bonnie Auchincloss** from our branch judged and gave two special awards from AAUW. Each year we give an award to a seventh grade girl and to an eighth grade girl.

The seventh grade winner was **Abigail Gagnon-Vishnefsky** whose project was titled "Beat the Heat with These Cool Clothes." She explained the effect of different colored clothes, silicone coated fabrics, and black and white fabrics in maintaining a cool temperature in a hot environment.



The eighth grade winner was **Kanistia Bahierathan** with a project titled "Thermoelectricity Fueling the Future." It described the use of different metals in heat/electricity producing effects.

Both girls are students at St. Mary's School, Fishkill, NY. ■



THE BUNNIES ARE COMING!

Betty Harrel *462-2141 * bharrel28@gmail.com

.....and so are the tigers, frogs, bears and puppies. *Leading to Reading* is once again collecting SMALL (up to 8 inches) stuffed animals to put in our Fuzzy Friends kits. Along with two new books and craft supplies, they go to children who are in stressful situations and need something soft to cuddle. In the past, we've donated them to Grace Smith House and the Children's Home Group Emergency Foster Care Center.



We will have a collection basket at the annual dinner in June. Please join our annual celebration and come with a soft friend for a child in need.

Thanks so much for your never-ending support!! ■

RESERVATION FOR ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 11, 2015

Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

If you making reservations for more than one person list all additional names.

The cost is \$42 per person.

Enclosed \$ _____ for _____ attendee(s).

Make checks payable to: **Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.**

Please mail reservations to:

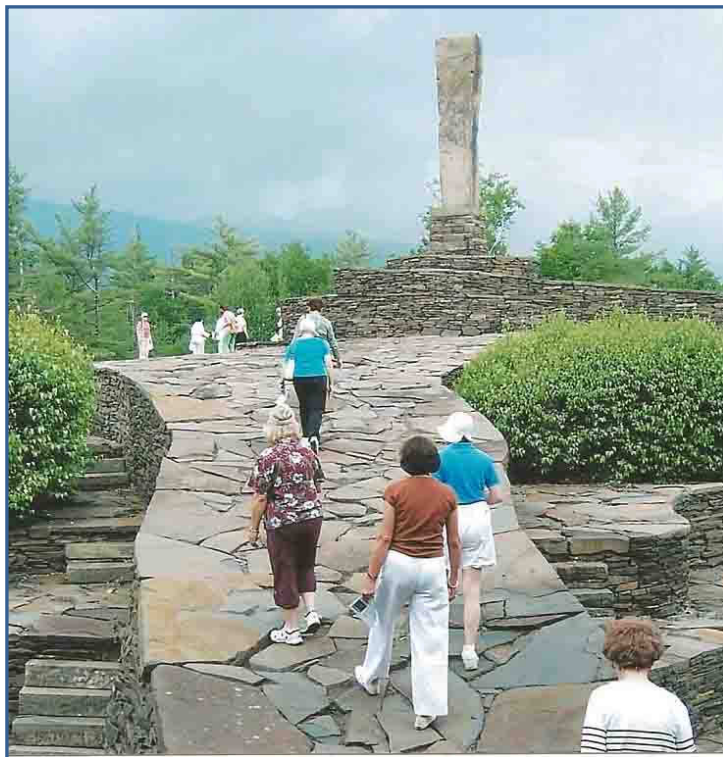
Sheila Zweifler
8 Van Duzer Drive
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Reservations are due by May 31st
(No refunds after June 1st)

Open seating, no table reservations.

Questions: 845/462-6478 or sheilaz@optonline.net

POUGHKEEPSIE AAUW BRANCH CELEBRATING 90 YEARS!



A Poughkeepsie AAUW trip to Opus 40! Does anyone recognize the back of their head? This was before Trekkers and before Soleil. <http://www.opus40.org/>

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo *883-5181* pattide2@optonline.net

What is Wrong with the Right Picture?

As well it should, unbridled outrage sparked over the Indiana Religious Freedom Act, a bill that suggested it would be within ones purview to discriminate against the LGBT community if it conflicted with an individual religious doctrine. The phrase "we won't tolerate intolerance" has become a mantra for both individuals, businesses, and major corporations in Indiana. In response to the up rise, modifications to the bill prohibit businesses from using the law as a defense in court for refusing "to offer or provide services, facilities, use of public accommodations, goods, employment, or housing" to any customers based on "race, color, religion, ancestry, age, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or United States military service."

So what is wrong with this picture? I am jealous, green with envy and mad. As a woman I have been discriminated against my entire life, yet few have jumped to my defense with such passion, ardor and action. I think America does tolerate intolerance...when it comes to women.

Forty tech companies announced they would pull their business out of Indiana. They solidified a position to not discriminate or tolerate discrimination against LGBT. Apple's CEO announced he was gay and likewise pledged company support for LGBT rights both in the corporate and consumer market. Why haven't these companies fully committed to developing women in the upper divisions of the STEM fields? Did I miss their commitment to equalize positions for women?

From Hollywood to New York, the entertainment industry is bandwagoning. Actors Equity is in receipt of a petition to pull its tours and thespians from Indiana. NASCAR, a typically male focused activity, assured its following that they would not subscribe to any type of intolerance. Performers are canceling their performances in Indiana. Celebrities have issued abundant criticisms. Where were these companies and celebrities when the ERA was up for ratification? Did they threaten to pull their resources from the 15 states that failed to ratify?

Have you checked your paycheck lately! National averages show a \$0.22 an hour gender gap. Is this a tolerable situation? If you are a man it is, but not if you are a woman. According to AAUW, Hispanic and Latina women were paid only 54 percent of what white men were paid. American Indian and Alaskan native women earned 59 percent of what a white man did in 2013. Black women earned 64 percent, and Asian American women were paid 90 percent of what a white man was paid. Congress has yet to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. Where is the proactive movement to end wage discrimination?

The 5-4 Hobby Lobby decision set women's reproductive rights back fifty years, did the same businesses and celebrities take to the media in protest? The rights of women again take a back seat to the interests of men. 5 men assented in the Hobby Lobby decision, 4 women dissented. Where are the protesters? Lily, the world wide Indianapolis based pharmaceutical company was quick to react and affirm their support of the LGBT community. But where was the leading supplier of birth control pills when the Hobby Lobby decision allowed insurance companies to shift payment to the individual?

But we move with the times. Kirsten Gillibrand's new bill, **The Family Act**, abolishes the words "paternity" and "maternity" and introduces "gender and age neutral." *The bill guarantees all living beings the opportunity to take twelve weeks of paid leave for medical situations.* Gender neutral, of course, is the euphemistic inclusion of LGBT that would cover child rearing as well as any personal or family medical emergency. How afraid are we of saying maternity/paternity leave because it implies gender specificity? But if it takes the term "gender neutral" to provide women with paid maternity or child rearing leave and personal medical leave for self or family, vocabularies can be altered. Something for the men provides something for the women.



March madness is truly at its best!■

FAMILY ACT INTRODUCED IN HOPEWELL

Patricia DeLeo *883-5181* pattide2@optonline.net

AAUW was invited to the Kirsten Gillibrand press conference announcing her introduction of **The Family Act**. Barbara Van Itallie, Mary Coiteux, Elaine Hofstetter and Pat DeLeo were there for the announcement at Spectral



Systems in Hopewell Junction. Spectral is a business of sixty that develops sophisticated optics and lenses. They welcomed the opportunity to offer their employees paid leave benefits. Their aim is to maintain their highly skilled staff while providing them with the time they may need to have quality living. ■

Elaine, Mary & Kirsten

IMPORTANT AAUW NATIONAL VOTE ON ELIMINATION OF DEGREE REQUIREMENT

Barbara Van Itallie *462-3924* bvanitallie@yahoo.com

In the National AAUW election this year, there is a proposed bylaw amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for membership. The eligibility requirement for membership would read, "Anyone who supports Article II (stating the purpose/mission of AAUW) of these Bylaws shall be eligible for AAUW membership," striking the qualification of a graduate holding an associate or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a qualified educational institution.

There are differences of opinions among individual board members on this issue. However we urge you to vote. Some arguments on each side:

In favor of the elimination of the requirement for a college degree:

- Restricting membership is inequitable and limits our influence in the community
- An organization is strongest when its members actively support its mission
- Requiring a degree mistakenly implies that only those with degrees could possibly advocate for or value education of women and girls
- The AAUW objective to break down barriers for women is weakened by our own barrier for membership
- Membership recruitment would be greatly simplified without the awkward questions about college degrees
- There are women with significant accomplishments who would be assets to our organization but whose "education" came from years of practical experience and community service
- May increase membership in some branches where membership is an issue

Opposing the elimination of the requirement for a college degree:

- Continues long legacy of AAUW's membership and purpose for being created
- Provides common bond among members as all have shared some college experience
- AAUW's credibility has been built on the basis of a well-educated membership
- Provides an incentive for others to pursue a college degree or continue on for a 4 year degree
- Provides recognition to those who join for accomplishing an important academic achievement
- Members serve as role models for students to complete their education
- Since there are many single-interest groups focused on mission aspects, there would be little reason to join AAUW

All members are eligible to vote on this proposal and other bylaw changes, candidates for the national board and proposed Public Policy program. **On-line voting takes place between April 15 and June 19.** To vote on line you will need your AAUW ID and the Pin number found on the back of the latest *Outlook* magazine (or obtained by phone). You may also request a paper ballot for voting. Please go to www.aauw.org and click on "AAUW National Election" for details on this issue in the "Voter Guide," other issues and candidates on the ballot, and detailed instructions on how to vote. Be sure to vote! ■

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Kay Saderholm *229-8545* ksaderholm@aol.com

Welcome to new member **Sue-Ellen Sohn!**

It's that time of the year! Yes, spring is here. And also, it is time for all you wonderful Poughkeepsie Branch members to renew your membership for another year.

You should be receiving in the US mail your **renewal form for the 2015-2016 year very soon.** Note the message which gives all members an opportunity to be in a **raffle for free National memberships.** You can be one of the lucky winners this year.

Also, fill in the **membership information form at the bottom of the page** if there are any changes in your information. You will also notice that there is a second form (Member Profile) to fill out – you filled out one similar to it when you joined for the first time but we want to keep all the information about you up to date – so please include the second form as well.

Find a comfortable place to write, grab your checkbook and a cup of coffee, fill everything out and mail it in the enclosed envelope. Soon! The membership committee would like to report at the annual meeting in June that all of you sent in your renewals. ■

Purpose and Organization of the Mothers Group

Continued from page 1...

New mothers are often isolated at this important and vulnerable time in their lives when the support of other women and mothers can make a critical difference in their parenting skills. The healthcare system provides support for pregnant women. Yet during the postpartum period the standard follow up is one postpartum visit for the mother when the baby is six weeks old. This group was started to address the need for more intensive support and education during this time.

The group is run by volunteers from local organizations including healthcare, social service, art community, education, faith based, and women's organizations (AAUW). Each group meeting begins with an art project, proceeds to a discussion on a parenting curriculum or women's health/nutrition/infant care or other topics of interest to new mothers. Healthy snacks are provided at each meeting and time is set aside for the mothers to socialize and learn from the other mothers at the group. ■

THANK YOU,

Betty Harrel *462-2141*
bharrel28@gmail.com



The Leading to Reading

project recently received a grant from the Stewart's Holiday Match Program. Stewart's customers donated over \$770,000 from Thanksgiving to Christmas, which was then matched by the company. The money was to be used to support programs for children in local communities. The grant will be used to purchase books and supplies for our family reading kits and for our *Books for Babies* program.

With the help of our members and community organizations, we've been able to donate over 17,000 books since the project began. We truly appreciate the support of our neighbors and local businesses!■

WHAT IS ON YOUR AGENDA?

School Board and Budget Votes

Patricia DeLeo *883-5181* pattide2@optonline.net

Voters have agendas. **What is your agenda when you vote for your school budget and board members?** For some it is to guarantee a son or daughter will have an after school activity. For others it is strictly about taxes. And unfortunately, some vote yes or no because it is the only budget they can control.

One of AAUW's tenets is to advocate and support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, and diversity. This includes protection and development of STEM programs; vigorous enforcement of Title IX; accessible sex education; access for women to higher education and opposition to funding for non public and charter schools not held to the same standards as public schools.

Those "vote yes for school budget" placards are ready to decorate front lawns and budget hearings will be open to the public. Meet the candidates coffee klatches will introduce hopeful civil servants to the public they hope to serve. **Now is the time to ask the questions that people usually entertain after the votes have been tallied.**

How much district money was devoted to the non public schools? If the money was not earmarked for those schools, how would the district utilize those funds in a budget?

How many girls are enrolled in higher level math classes, such as physics, calculus and AP classes? What is the percentage of male and female instructors in those courses?

What initiatives are in place to register girls for computer science courses? Who are teaching those courses? What partnerships exist with local businesses and corporations to integrate women into STEM fields? What outside agencies do you have relationships with to support women in the workplace?

Has the district been charged with any Title IX violations? What is the ratio male/female sports being offered? Are male and female coaching salaries equal in pay?

In what ways do you address sex education in the district's K-12 curriculum?

What percentage of girls are receiving scholarships designated for STEM studies?

Once you have answers to these questions, set your agenda and vote in the May 19 elections. ■

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Margaret Nijhuis *635-8612* MargaretNijhuis@gmail.com

On March 13, 2015, eight Poughkeepsie AAUW women: Judy Elkin, Sabashnee Govender, Gwen Higgins, Peggy Kelland, Doris Kelly, Erica Salzmann-Talbi, Christie Van Horne and I 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."

Each of us attended different combinations of presentations taking place in three location near the UN. Below you can read excerpts from Sabashnee Govender's and Judy Elkin's day. Their complete reports can be found linked from the home page of our website www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

Sabashnee Govender said "I was awe struck by the presentations that I attended on Friday. The sessions I attended angered, inspired, challenged and motivated me.

My first session was "Developing the Women's Shelter Network at Regional, Continental and Global Levels." Some of the panelist were not only leaders of shelter networks in their country but also victims of violence. I was particularly inspired by the panelist from Austria. Austria has a law where the abuser is removed from the home instead of the victim going to a shelter."

Judy Elkin said "It was during our first session, "Documenting Violence against Women through access to Democracy," that I first learned about the treatment of widows in different parts of Africa. After the deaths of their husbands, widows are often isolated, seen as pariahs or witches, and have to prove, through rituals, that they were not complicit in the death.

We were able to hear from and speak to the courageous women who addressed us – some lawyers who are working to change laws – others in the field working directly with woman and their families to overcome the cycles of poverty that feed into wars and disease. These speakers were an inspiration. I urge other AAUW members to attend next year."

As you can see it was certainly a day well spend and we encourage each of you to remember next March to plan on spending at least one day at the parallel events for the Commission on the Status of Women.■



NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mary Lou Davis *223-5544* maryloudavis125@gmail.com

It is with great pleasure that the Nominating Committee announces the following slate of officers:

For 2015-2017:

Program Co-Vice Presidents:

Sandy Goldberg, Betsy Kopstein-Stuts

Membership Vice President: Susie Blecker

Educational Fund Vice President: Linda Roberts

For 2015-2016:

Membership Treasurer: Mary Anne Hogarty

Election and Installation will be held at the June 11 annual meeting, to be held at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel. Nominations may be made from the floor with the written permission of the nominee.

Nomination Committee: Mary Lou Davis, chair; Kathy Friedman; Eileen Hayden; Bergie Lebovitch and Vivian Rose. ■

CANDIDATES FOR POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH OFFICERS

Sandra G. Goldberg, nominee Program Co-Vice President

Sandy joined AAUW in 2010 and has been very active in two bridge groups since that time.

She was a member of the Dutchess County Legislature 1982- 1993; 2004-2011, serving both as Majority Leader and Minority Leader, she was a member of all committees in those roles and liaison to many community and government boards. She is active in the Democratic Party on the local and county level. As a member of the Democratic Women's Caucus, she has trained candidates and is involved in a research study regarding the County Jail. One of her most interesting experiences was as NYS delegate to the 1976 Democratic Presidential Convention.

Sandy was an account representative for Liberty Mutual Group until she retired.

Sandy is past President and active in her local Synagogue, past member of League of Women Voters and past President of the Wappingers PTA Council.

She holds a BA from Syracuse University in Political Science and a MS from Columbia Teachers College in Curriculum and Teaching.

Sandy has three children and three grandchildren. ■



Betsy Kopstein-Stuts, nominee Program Co-Vice President

Betsy Kopstein-Stuts, a native Poughkeepsian, returned to her roots in 1967 and immediately decided to get involved in giving back to her community. She has served as president of 12 organization including Poughkeepsie South Rotary, Catharine Street Center, Temple Beth-El, Voluntary Action Center of Dutchess County, B'nai B'rith and District Governor of Rotary District 7210. She has received many accolades for having achieved or exceeded established organizational goals.



Betsy's has a vast and varied experience in the not-for-profit world. Her skills and accomplishments (all of which will be an asset to Poughkeepsie AAUW) include:

- Exceptional **communication skills** as an effective speaker having addressed groups of 600 or more.
- Ability to work as a **team player** with people of diverse backgrounds.
- Effectively placed over 500 students per year in internships in the Hudson Valley for academic credit.
- Have led leadership training courses for international organization.
- Created and led **fundraisers netting \$25,000** and have been the liaison to the community as representative of her employer.

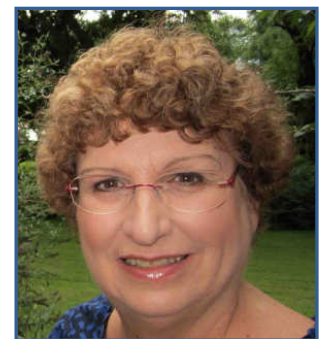
Betsy's work in the academic community included Vassar College, Dutchess Community College, and Arlington High School.

She earned BA in history from the University of Michigan and MS in education from the University of Pennsylvania. ■

Sarah (Susie) B. Blecker, nominee Membership Vice President

Susie grew up in Ft. Lauderdale, FL and was educated at Florida State University.

She taught secondary English in rural schools in Clewiston, FL and at a predominately black high school in Jeffersonville, GA. Susie is particularly proud of the time she spent in Twiggs County, GA when she worked on desegregation of the library and other public facilities. Susie taught secondary English in Berlin, CT and also started the drama club.



Continued on page 10...

Sarah B. Blecker Continued...

Susie has lived in Poughkeepsie for 28 years and was a stay-at-home Mom for many years during which time she volunteered at the Spackenkill elementary school assisting in the reading and art programs. She helped run the PTA at three of Spackenkill's schools and served as the district president.

Susie returned to work at Spackenkill High School as a Teaching Assistant and spent 11 years at Spackenkill High School working with Special Education students.

She has been AAUW's Program co-chair for the last two years and was the Poughkeepsie Branch's "Emerging Leader" last year. ■

Linda Roberts, nominee Educational Opportunities Fund Vice President

Linda Roberts has been an active member of Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc. for over ten years. She has been on the Board several times, first as VP of Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) and more recently as VP of Education Opportunities Fund (EOF).

Linda has served as co-chair of the annual Writer's Tea for 3 years as well as chair of the Tea Auction for all six that the Tea has been held. Along with her committee and the support of the membership, the Tea Auction has raised a considerable amount of money to support AAUW's Community programs and Scholarships. She is the Treasurer of AAUW-NYS Convention, a position she has held for a number of years. She has enjoyed being involved in many of the varied Interest Groups in AAUW. Linda is very inspired by the many bright women she has come to know in our AAUW branch. In her spare time, Linda enjoys traveling and spending time with her wonderful family. ■



Mary Anne Hogarty, nominee Membership Treasurer



My husband Ed and I live in Hopewell Junction, where we somehow manage to keep very busy in retirement. We are finding more and more that learning simply goes on and on!

After college graduation with majors in Math and Elementary Ed, I taught fourth grade for a few years and then joined IBM in San Francisco as a programmer. I stayed at IBM (on and off) for 25 years, with several

different job titles, until my retirement in 2006.

In the meantime, Ed and I raised four children, moved a number of times, and discovered that we love "rainy" Seattle. For the past eight years, I have volunteered as an instructor and site coordinator for the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program which prepares tax returns for low- and middle-class clients – a very rewarding way to spend the chilly winter. And then of course, from May to October I catch up on all the reading I've missed!

I have been a member of AAUW's Poughkeepsie Branch for three years and am looking forward to serving as Membership Treasurer. ■

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

Will everyone (even if you have done it before) please fill out and return the Membership Profile with your dues. There is a new, easier to understand, format. The information is so very helpful to anyone trying to plan events and programs for Poughkeepsie AAUW!

Let's have 100% return rate (or 99%) at the least!!! ■



Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc. Officers 2014-2015

President	Barbara Van Itallie	462-3924
Program V.P.	Susie Blecker	462-7074
	Mary Coiteux	226-8275
Membership V.P.	Kay Saderholm	229-8545
Educ. Foundation V.P.	Linda Roberts	227-5287
Secretary	Katherine Friedman	485-8671
Treasurer	Diane Jablonski	485-6228
Membership Treasurer	Mary Anne Hogarty	221-0203

Association website: www.aauw.org

NY State website: www.aauw-nys.org

Poughkeepsie Branch website: www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

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

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

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