



BRANCHING Out

A Publication of the AAUW Carlisle (PA) Branch - Organized 1924

AAUW - Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research

Volume 61, Number 5

December 2024

Upcoming AAUW Events

December Holiday Brunch

Saturday, December 7, 10 am
Dickinson Social Hall East

*Enjoy Brunch & a Festive Performance by
Cantate Carlisle!*

More Information here 

Breakfast Club

Saturday, December 14, 9 am
Cracked Pot (36 N. Hanover St., Carlisle)
RSVP to Wendy Armour Dickinson [here](#)

Saturday, January 11, 2025, 9 am
Cracked Pot (36 N. Hanover St., Carlisle)
RSVP to Wendy Armour Dickinson [here](#)

Book Club

Monday, January 6; 1 pm
The Women; Kristin Hannah
Panera;
40 Noble Blvd, Carlisle
RSVP to Wendy Armour Dickinson [here](#)
Preview 2024-25 Book Selections on page 4

No January Branching Out

Submit to the February Branching Out Before
Monday, January 20
Submit to Peggy Jennings [here](#)

January Membership Meeting

Vegetable Gardening
Maureen Cantwell,
Penn State Master Gardener
Tuesday, January 28, 2025; 7 pm
HUB Side Rooms 204 & 205
More Information on Page 2

Preview future Membership Meetings on
page 6

Tis the Season

Festive Holiday Brunch featuring Cantate Carlisle
Saturday, December 7; 10 am
Dickinson Social Hall East



Begin the holiday season this year by attending the Holiday Brunch and be entertained with seasonal music by select singers from Cantate Carlisle. An auditioned adult choir of 40-50 members, Cantate typically performs two concerts per year while also enjoying community collaborations with the West Shore Symphony Orchestra and Dickinson College. Cantate has also assisted with choir camp activities at the Summer Program for Youth (SPY) and hosted an intern through the Carlisle Chamber of Commerce. The organization has expanded to include a youth choir and a children's choir.

Cantate is led by artistic director Michelle Trefren, who has been a church musician since middle school. A graduate of Syracuse University with a degree in piano performance and Westminster Choir College with a degree in conducting, Michelle has taught music at Yokohama International Music School and directed the Tokyo International Children's Choir. She currently serves as music director at Second Presbyterian Church and teaches private piano and voice lessons.

Please note that this branch meeting is a community outreach opportunity; the branch is collecting toilet paper to donate to Community Cares. Attendees will also have the chance to win beautifully decorated centerpieces as we kick off the higher education scholarship drive with the sale of ticket opportunities. Bring your cash!



Letter from the President

We are all still digesting the results of the election. Not only will we not see the first woman in the White House, but many of the issues affecting women, in particular, that we care so deeply about, face potential setbacks.

Although we may feel overwhelmed at times when looking at the totality of what lies ahead, we need to accept that we cannot fight every battle. We need to focus on where we can do the most good and make the most difference. And, for now, that focus is local.

The balance of power in Harrisburg has NOT changed and we will continue to advocate for the bi-partisan Family Care Act and work to finally get it passed in both chambers.

Locally, we can continue to monitor local school boards and push back on some of the extreme efforts by Moms for Liberty representatives to make our schools less inclusive, less supportive of marginalized students, and to dictate which books our children and grandchildren are allowed to read. Along with speaking out at school board meetings, some of us have even organized groups in some districts to support new common sense candidates to reverse this recent extremism.

If anything, our work has become even MORE important, not less. Our influence will only lessen if we throw up our hands and give up. I trust that, like me, you will all dust yourselves off and rejoin the mission to do what we can to improve the lives of women and girls.

Remember that we are stronger together. Onward!

Kate Elkins

AAUW Carlisle Branch Higher Education Scholarship

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce “on all fronts” publicity for this year’s \$2,000 Scholarships. Our efforts to secure qualified applicants in Cumberland and Perry counties include newspaper postings, flyers in libraries and churches, and email notifications to multiple institutions and partners in our community. Brand new this year are the electronic billboards around town!

Our branch website has been updated to make it easier for students to apply for Scholarships and for members to contribute to the Scholarship fund. Check out the new format! <https://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/scholarship/>

Please note that your much-appreciated donation to the Scholarship fund is in the drop-down menu under Higher Education Scholarship. In addition, please look out for the Appeal letter from the Funds Committee in January. Your donation reflects our commitment to our mission and our belief in advancing our future through education.

We received three applications in the first week! We are off and running. The application deadline is **January 21, 2025**. Thank you for your continued support.

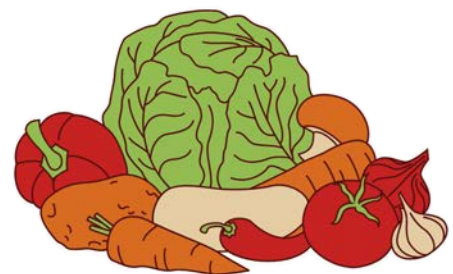
Lillian Wong and Gail D’Urso
Co-chairs of Scholarship



January Membership Meeting

Vegetable Gardening
Maureen Cantwell, Ann State Master Gardener
Tuesday, January 28, 2025; 7 pm
HUB Side Rooms 204 & 205

Our January 28 meeting will feature Maureen Cantwell, Penn State Master Gardener. Join us for an exciting gardening adventure with Maureen, a proud US Army veteran and Master Gardener extraordinaire with 11 years of experience in Cumberland County! Learn all about creating your own backyard vegetable garden, from site planning and choosing your veggies to planting, weeding, and harvesting. Let’s get growing together!



Public Policy

PA State Senator Devlin Robinson, the only Republican co-sponsor of the Paid Family Leave Act, was re-elected. His support is critical in making this a bi-partisan bill in the Senate. We hope this important bill regains momentum going into the new year.



Next Topic Talk

“Revive, Regroup, Refresh”

It will focus on self-care and managing physical and mental health. The date, time, and location will be provided in early January.

If you haven't registered yet, please consider signing up for the **Two-Minute Activist** through AAUW:

<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>

It is easy to receive regular alerts about when and how to engage, including sending letters to legislators, writing letters to the editor, and making other timely calls to action.

Kelly Spasic and Theresa Rice
Public Policy Co-Chairs

From Summer 24 Camp Invention

For the past several years the Branch has been sponsoring one scholarship for a girl to Camp Invention which is held during the summer. Our scholarship recipient, Izzah, has written a thank you letter to the Branch.

“Dear Camp Invention (Sponsor)

I am writing to you to tell you how thankful I am for the scholarship sponsor. This is my second year I'm grateful you chose me for the sponsor. One thing I enjoyed about this year was making the light box.

Sincerely Izzah”

Jim Burgess, our contact for Camp Invention has shared some pictures of this year's event which were highlighted in the Sentinel and can be viewed [here](#):

WE NEED YOUR DONATIONS OF CLOTHING

Dickinson Free xChange urgently needs clean, well-kept clothing donations for the space. Specifically, we need winter clothing and accessories, such as coats, hats, gloves, thermals, and sweaters. We have many new and international students who may be embarking on their first winter, and when these items are in stock, they go quickly! We welcome T-shirts, layers, flannels, business wear, reusable tote bags, hangers, pants, shorts, sweats, sports gear, costumes, etc.



Donations can be placed in the Free xChange (lower level of the HUB—inside the old mailboxes), at the Center for Sustainability Education (Kaufman 190), or by contacting Katie Schweighofer (click name to connect to email) for a special pick-up.

Save, Swap, and Share: Visit the Free xChange and consider donating today.

<https://www.dickinson.edu/freexchange>

Katie Schweighofer
Dickinson College Liaison

Book Group

Date	Time	Hostess	Book
Monday, Feb 3	1:00 pm	Pat M	<i>James</i> ; Percival Everett
Monday, Mar 3	1:00 pm	Panera	<i>Dinners with Ruth</i> ; Nina Totenberg
Monday, Apr 7	7:00 pm	Janet	<i>Lives of Girls and Women</i> ; Alice Munro
Monday, May 5	7:00 pm	Darlis	<i>Within Arm's Reach</i> ; Ann Napolitano
Monday, June 9	6:00 pm	DINNER	1794 Whiskey Rebellion

***What's Up in Pennsylvania?
News from AAUW Pennsylvania***

Because I know you would like to plan and mark your calendar, the AAUW Pennsylvania 2025 Summer Retreat will be held on June 27-28, 2025, in the State College area. You don't want to inadvertently schedule a vacation and have to miss this event! 😊 Details will be shared as they are finalized.

Ann Pehle
AAUW Pennsylvania College/University Liaison



AAUW Economic Empowerment Initiative

These webinars are designed to provide you with the tools and knowledge needed to negotiate better salaries, enhance your career, and achieve financial independence. Whether you're a student stepping into the professional world or a seasoned professional aiming to advance, these webinars offer valuable insights for every stage of your career. **Check out this schedule and secure your spot** to start transforming your future today.

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/womens-economic-empowerment-initiative/>



STEM Update




Helping with the Junior Achievement STEM Summit
Barb Attivo, Kathy Weigl, Katherine DiCrocco, Lillian Wong, and Cherry France

To continue to support the Branch effort for STEM, a future Junior Achievement (JA) opportunity is coming at the end of January. We are looking for volunteers for Cumberland Valley's 9th Grade Academy on January 29, 30, and 31.

JA provides a highly organized and well-scripted activity to do with students. Some activities are done in small groups of no more than 6 students; other activities are supervising a larger group of students with a partner.

Five branch members participated in October at Carlisle High School over a two-day period.

If you have questions or would like to volunteer for any one or more of the days, contact Lillian Wong or Barb Attivo for more information.

AAUW Carlisle Needs YOU for Community Activities ...  **... including events and programs like these!**

In the nine or ten years that I have been a member of AAUW Carlisle, Vicky Carl, Cindy Sutton, and, most recently, Jenifer Johnson have planned and run wonderful community activities. Recent activities include The Bower Native Garden and Sculpture Park, Eisenhower Farm in Gettysburg, Cumberland County Courthouse, the Carlisle Indian School, Warehime Mayers Mansion in Hanover, and Three Mile House. The complete list is much longer!

Unfortunately, the branch has been unable to find an individual member to assume sole responsibility for coordinating Community Activities. Kate and I have been discussing a possible alternative.

Our Programs, Scholarship, and Trailblazer Committees have co-chairs who call meetings and oversee the work of their specific areas. However, members of each Committee complete discrete tasks. Sharing our work in these ways spreads the responsibilities so no individual carries the entire load. Most importantly, members are accountable to each other, and the work ALWAYS GETS DONE!

Community Activities could operate in a similar manner. The year could be planned so members know about opportunities well in advance. Knowing dates in advance could also increase attendance.

It could work like this: One Chairperson or, ideally, two Co-Chairs call an organizational meeting. The Committee meets to brainstorm possible community activities and decide which ones to pursue. Each member assumes responsibility for one activity, setting up the date, time, cost, and location. That member publicizes the event and accepts RSVPs and payment, if applicable. If the schedule of events is created early enough, it could be included in the monthly newsletter and even in the yearbook.

If you want to be more involved in the branch's operations and think this idea could work, please contact Kate Elkins and let her know you are interested in helping to create the **NEW** AAUW Carlisle Community Activities Committee.

Gail D'Urso
speaking from experience as Co-Chair of Trailblazer & Scholarship Committees, Past Co-Chair of Program & Membership Committees, member of 95th and 100th Anniversary Committee, and Beyond Suffrage Committee



A visit to the old Courthouse



Lillian Wong and Kate Elkins



Molly Pitcher Gravesite



Cumberland County Historical Society
"A Woman's Place: The Changing Role of Women in Cumberland County."



Ladew Topiary Gardens
Cherry France & Jenifer Johnson



Eisenhower Farm

AAUW Carlisle 2024-2025 Board Members

Elected Officers

President: Kate Elkins

Vice President: Nancy Sigrist

Membership VPs: Cindy Sutton, Janet Kacsur

Program VPs: Deborah Sweaney, Jeanna Som

Finance Officers: Cherry France, Molly Shane

Secretary: Marina Young

Appointed Committee Chairs

AAUW Funds: Becky Morgenthal

Communications: Pat Markowski

Community Activities:

Interest Groups: Wendy Armour Dickinson

Public Policy: Theresa Rice, Kathy Spasic

Scholarship: Lillian Wong, Gail D’Urso

STEM: Barb Attivo, Lilian Wong

Appointed Off Board Committee Chairs

College Liaison: Katie Schweighofer

Historian: Mary Bloser Berwick

Appointed Coordinators

Newsletter Editor: Peggy Jennings

Social Media: Kate Elkins

Trailblazers: Gail D’Urso, Barb Attivo

Webpages: Sharon Heller

Yearbook: Virginia Mauk

**Branching Out is published August to June by
the AAUW Carlisle (PA) Branch**

Branch website is:

<http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/>

Like us on Facebook: @AAUWCarlisle

The Board welcomes questions:

aauwcarlisleinfo@gmail.com

Not receiving branch information?

Make sure emails from
aauwcarlisleinfo@gmail.com
aren’t going into your junk or spam folder.

Preview this year’s Membership Meetings!

Tuesday, January 28, 7 pm HUB Side Rooms
Maureen Cantwell, PSU Master Gardener, Cumberland County
Vegetable Gardening

Thursday, February 25, 7 pm, HUB Side Rooms
Lisa Kessler-Peters
Life and Redemption after Experience in the Justice System

Tuesday, March 25, 7 pm, HUB Side Rooms
Marcia Drozdowski, CEO of Carlisle YMCA
Trailblazing the World of Female Executive Leadership

Tuesday, April 29, 6 pm HUB Social Hall
Scholarship Banquet

Tuesday, May 27, 7 pm, HUB Side Rooms
Emily Schmidt
Cracked Pot—Aging Out of the Foster Care System

A Note About Member Contact Information

Because our newsletter is posted to our public website, for privacy reasons, we will no longer include personal email addresses or phone numbers as text in the newsletter. We will include only a “clickable” link with the embedded email address. If that function doesn’t work on your computer, please consult the branch Yearbook for member emails and phone numbers.



Like us @AAUWCarlisle

Like us @AAUW Pennsylvania

