



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 62, Number 5

December 2025/January 2026

Upcoming AAUW Events

Holiday Brunch

Saturday, December 6 at 10 am

More info here 

**Don't forget to bring shampoo & conditioner for
Community Cares!**

Breakfast Club

Saturday, December 13; 9 am

Saturday, January 17; 9 am

Cracked Pot (36 N. Hanover St., Carlisle)

RSVP to Wendy Armour Dickinson [here](#)

Book Club

Monday, January 5; 1 pm

Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

Wendy Armour Dickinson

1111 Pheasant Drive North, Carlisle

RSVP to Wendy Armour Dickinson [here](#)

Preview remaining Book Selections on page 5

Submit to the February Branching Out By

(NO January Branching Out)

Tuesday, January 20

Submit to Peggy Jennings [here](#)

Bubbles & Bling

Tuesday, January 20, from 5-6:30 pm

Castlerigg Wine Shop in Carlisle

More information on page 3

January Membership Meeting

Inside the Auction Industry:

A Female Perspective on Power, Value, and Voice

Tuesday, January 27; 7 pm

Dickinson College HUB Side Rooms 204-205

More information on page 2



Holiday Brunch

Saturday, December 6; 10 am

Allison Community Room; Dickinson College
99 Mooreland Avenue



We are delighted to welcome Cantate Carlisle back to our Christmas Brunch this year to help us celebrate the season with their inspiring performance.

An auditioned adult choir of 40–50 members, Cantate Carlisle is known for its exceptional artistry and dedication to the choral tradition. United by a passion for fine choral repertoire and the power of music to renew the soul and bring people together, Cantate presents a thoughtful and eclectic range of works, from masterworks with orchestra and a cappella contemporary classics to folk songs, Broadway selections, spirituals, and original commissioned pieces.



Under the direction of Michelle Trefren, Cantate continues to enrich the cultural life of our community through performances and collaborations with local organizations such as the West Shore Symphony Orchestra and Dickinson College. The group also supports the next generation of musicians through its youth and children's choirs, as well as through community engagement and educational programs.

We are honored to have select singers from Cantate Carlisle share their time and talent with us once again. Their music embodies the spirit of the holidays, inspiring joy, connection, and the warmth of community that this season represents.

**NOTE the location of the brunch this year is at the Allison
Community Room on the Dickinson campus at
99 Mooreland Avenue.**



Letter from the President



As I look to the upcoming holiday season, I am feeling hopeful. I have to confess to some periodic episodes of feeling powerless this past year in the face of so many rights and norms being yanked out from under us. But we can't underestimate the power of speaking up, banding together, and showing up, either on the square or at the polls this past election.

I feel that the tide is beginning to turn, and I hope you'll join me in recommitting to our mission come the first of the year.

But first, we have the holidays to celebrate! Through all of the twists and turns that life throws at us, it is our family and friends who stand with us, pick up the slack, and can be counted on for a much-needed laugh. There's a wonderful German saying my mother-in-law liked to say; "A sense of humor is when you can laugh **in spite** of everything."

I look to all of you as those kinds of friends. May you celebrate all that is good in your lives over the holidays. Hope to see you at the **Holiday Brunch!!**

Kate Elkins



January Membership Meeting Inside the Auction Industry: A Female Perspective on Power, Value, and Voice

Tuesday, January 27; 7 pm

Dickinson College HUB Side Rooms 204-205

Auctions have long been seen as a fast-paced, male-driven industry, but women are changing that narrative. From the podium to the bidding floor, women are claiming leadership roles as auctioneers, appraisers, collectors, and powerful decision-makers. This talk will explore the evolving role of women in the auction world, offering insight into how auctions work, what items hold value, and why antiques, art, and collectibles are more than just décor -- they're assets and legacies. Attendees will leave with a fresh perspective on auctions as platforms for empowerment, investment, and storytelling.

The talk will be presented by Erika Kelly (President) and Jane Seibert (Director of Consignments & Marketing) at Cordier Auctions in Harrisburg, PA, where they work every day to help clients preserve history, build collections, and bring unique items to a global marketplace.

There will be another opportunity to learn from those at Cordier Auctions on **Friday, May 15 at 6:30 pm** at the Stuart Community Center. You can enjoy the Carlisle version of the Antiques Roadshow! Cordier Auctions will run a Theatre Style Group Appraisal where you are encouraged to bring UP TO 3 items that might be chosen for discussion. After a brief introduction to the world of auctions and a discussion about value, Cordier Auctions will discuss some of the objects brought for review. If you would like to bring an item, please be sure to **arrive by 6:00 pm** so that those at Cordier Auctions can review your item before the event begins.



Community Activities Updates

Move Over, Rockettes!

Our Dancercise class led by Karen Cassamassa was so much fun!



Thank you!

A very special thank you from the Funds Committee to the centerpiece sponsors for the Holiday Brunch. Their generosity allows all of the "opportunity" money to go towards the Scholarship Fund.

Marina Young

Nancy Sigrist

Ann Pehle

Virginia Mauk

Patty Stibitz

Opportunities to win our centerpieces will be available:

\$20 for 12 tickets

\$10 for 6 tickets

\$ 5 for 3 tickets

\$ 2 for 1 ticket



Mary Bloser Berwick
Funds Chair

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Community Activities

Be on the lookout for the following community activities in 2026:

Bubbles & Bling: Gather at Castlerigg Wine Shop in Carlisle on Tuesday, January 20, from 5-6:30 pm for a short presentation from Marjorie Romano from Marjorie's Gems. She will tell us about current trends, give tips on how to know if your jewelry is valuable, and do a few appraisals. Wine and appetizers will be available for purchase from Castlerigg. Please RSVP to Virginia Mauk [here](#) or 240.338.2862 by Friday, January 16.

Let's Cook Mediterranean: Sarah Davis from Penn State Extension will share her knowledge with a cooking demonstration on Monday, March 30 at 2 pm at Long Shot Farms. Cost will be \$20 to sample the Mediterranean fare. Wine will be available for purchase from Long Shot. More information to come!



What's Up in Pennsylvania News from AAUW Pennsylvania

AAUW Pennsylvania is **not** holding a conference/convention in the Spring nor a Summer Retreat in 2026. The **ONLY** event to gather with AAUW members across Pennsylvania is the Atlantic States Regional Conference.

The venue is [Lancaster County Convention Center & Marriott Hotel in Lancaster, PA](#). Reservations are open NOW for discounted sleeping room rates. Click [here](#) to reserve your room.

*This will be a memorable event you won't want to miss.
Put September 25-27, 2026, on your calendar NOW.*

Ann Pehle
Retired AAUW Pennsylvania Board

UNFINISHED REVOLUTION: TOGETHER WE STAND



2026 AAUW Atlantic States Regional Conference
September 25-27, 2026
Lancaster County Convention Center
Lancaster, PA

News from National AAUW

In 1960, six-year-old Ruby Bridges became the first Black student to integrate William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans.

At AAUW, we honor Ruby's legacy by uplifting equity in classrooms nationwide. This includes expanding access to STEM opportunities and advocating for fair school policies and strong civil rights protections.

Ruby Bridges changed history. It's on all of us to continue building the educational future women and girls deserve.



**She Opened the Door.
We Make Sure It Stays Open.**



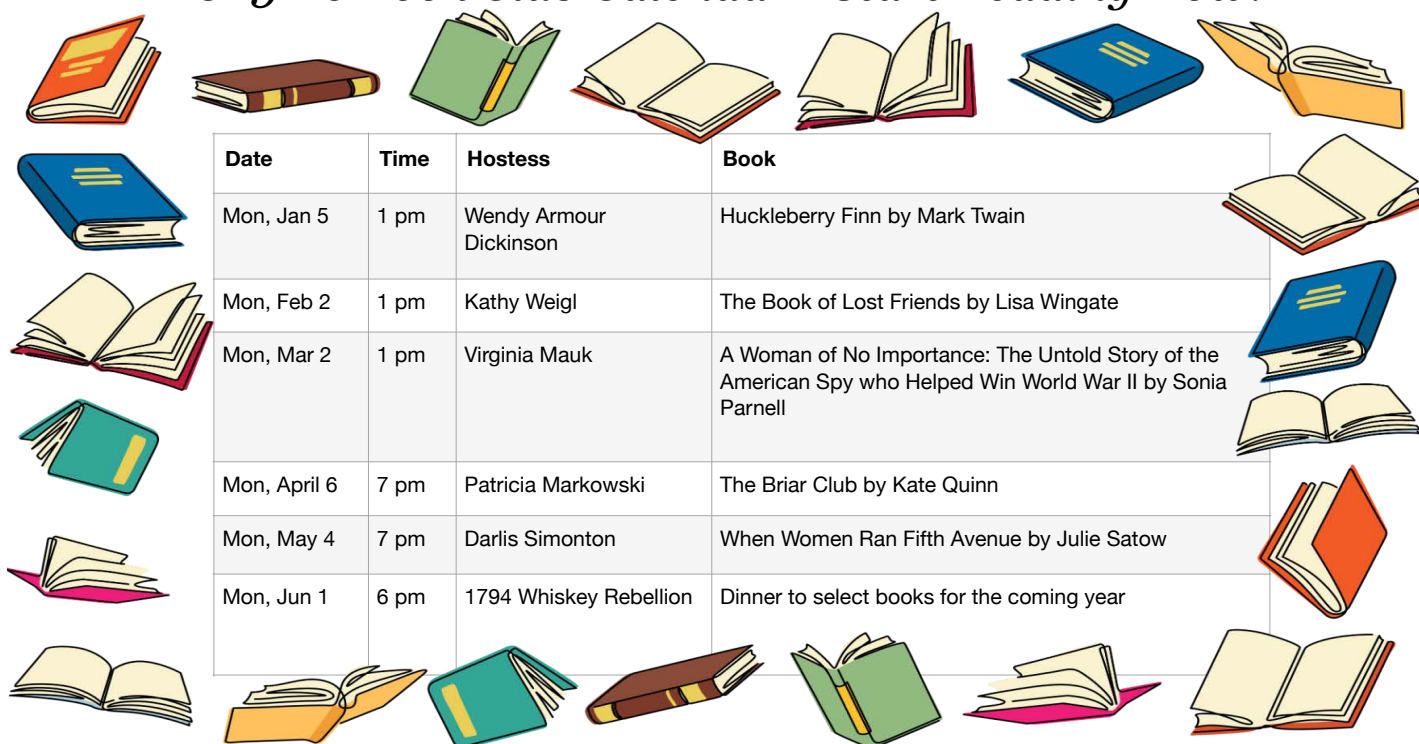
Public Policy Updates and Activities

AAUW's Public Policy work connects and rallies advocates at the local, state, national, and global levels to empower women and girls. AAUW uses lobbying and grassroots efforts to push forward policies that break through educational and economic barriers for women. Help us promote our policies by participating in our **2-minute activist**. Sign up [here](#).

If you are interested in joining our committee, please let us know!

Theresa Rice and Kelly Spasic
Public Policy Co-Chairs

2025-26 Book Club Calendar—Start Reading Now!



Date	Time	Hostess	Book
Mon, Jan 5	1 pm	Wendy Armour Dickinson	Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain
Mon, Feb 2	1 pm	Kathy Weigl	The Book of Lost Friends by Lisa Wingate
Mon, Mar 2	1 pm	Virginia Mauk	A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy who Helped Win World War II by Sonia Parnell
Mon, April 6	7 pm	Patricia Markowski	The Briar Club by Kate Quinn
Mon, May 4	7 pm	Darlis Simonton	When Women Ran Fifth Avenue by Julie Satow
Mon, Jun 1	6 pm	1794 Whiskey Rebellion	Dinner to select books for the coming year

2026 Scholarship Process is Underway!



Learning from our successes from last scholarship year, we instituted several ways to make the application process even easier for the women to apply. By the time we hit the submit button to share information with over 12 educational institutions, applications were being received! With the help of Peggy Jennings and her expertise in the process, we have streamlined the application procedure. Also, with the help of Sharon Heller, our website is easier to navigate, and applying can be accessed in more than one way!

Our branch website is also offering an easier way to donate to the Scholarship fund. In 2026, the membership will receive letters describing the educational achievements of our seven recipients from last year. This update will be included in the letter from the Funds Committee. Look for it in early January!

The Committee depends on the generosity and support from our membership to make the Scholarships available for qualified women hoping to advance their education. Each \$2,000 scholarship is well appreciated by recipients in this endeavor.

The Scholarship Committee is ready and excited to begin. Application deadline is January 20, 2026.

Lillian Wong and Gail D'Urso
Scholarship Committee Co-Chairs

Membership Matters

Let's welcome our newest member, Bonnie Berk! The AAUW-Carlisle branch is now 101 members strong.

Hope to see you at the December Brunch.

Janet Kacsur and Terri Glueck
Membership Committee Vice Presidents



AAUW Carlisle 2025-2026 Board Members

Elected Officers

President: Kate Elkins

Vice President: Nancy Sigrist

Membership VPs: Janet Kacsur, Terri Glueck

Program VPs: Jeanna Som, Grace Nguyen

Finance Officers: Molly Shane, Barb Attivo

Secretary: Meta Bowman

Appointed Committee Chairs

AAUW Funds: Mary Bloser Berwick

Communications: Marina Young

Community Activities: Gail D'Urso & Virginia Mauk

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: Ann Pehle

Appointed Coordinators

Newsletter: Peggy Jennings

Social Media: Kate Elkins

Trailblazers: Gail D'Urso, Cherry France

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.



Like us @AAUWCarlisle

Like us @AAUW Pennsylvania

From the October Membership Meeting!



Professor Susan Rose and Meta Bowman



Dr. Katie Schweighofer hangs up t-shirts from The Clothesline Project



Donations for the Domestic Violence Shelter