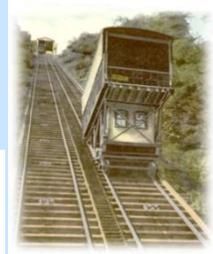




# Inclined to AAUW



March/April 2021

Volume XXVII, No. 9

March/April 2021

Volume XXVII, No. 9

Page 1

## President's Update

by Kathy Howanek (khowanek@hotmail.com)



Here's hoping that this note finds all of you who are eligible well on your way to a vaccine, and that our younger members are staying safe and well.

January meetings of the Branch Board are traditionally long, as there are several points of business that must be voted on to present to the membership at future meetings. This January's meeting definitely followed in that tradition! So first, a thank you to the board members for their hard work, patience and endurance. I don't want to give you the entire report or you won't have any reason to attend our first ever **Zoom membership meeting to be held on Saturday, February 27 at 1:00 pm**. It should be an interesting experience!

The sequel to the Women of Cambria County had some interest from members, but only as far as researching a particular woman. No one, two or three people volunteered to coordinate the project. Further research by Georgia Yeager revealed that the original book covered over 200 years, employed a minimum of three editors, several typists, proofreaders, as well as researchers and writers. Only women who were deceased were included. It was a massive undertaking which took three years to complete. At this time, if individual members are moved to research the contributions of area women, the branch could start a file for future publication or submit articles to be published in the local newspapers. More to come!

In addition to the branch elections which will be held at our May meeting, our votes are needed at the State and National level. Beginning now through March 31 voting is open for the following state offices: Membership VP, Finance Officer and Secretary. Members will have the opportunity to vote on these offices at our **February 27 meeting**. Beginning April 7 through May 17, voting will be open on the proposed change to the national by-laws concerning membership eligibility requirements. Specific details on this election will be discussed at our **February 27 meeting**.

And finally, if the bold letters were not enough hint, please plan to attend our February business meeting via **Zoom, Saturday February 27 at 10 am**. A link will be sent to all members a few days before the meeting.



by Ann Furlong ( akfurlong@verizon.net)

## Mary Louise Wyandt

We are greatly saddened to learn of the death of member Mary Louise Wyandt. Mary Lou was a valued member and a good friend. Her vitality and good cheer were always evident.

Mary Lou became a member of Johnstown Branch AAUW in the year 2000. Since that time she served in many capacities. Mary Lou was elected as Vice President of membership and later as Vice President for programming. Her committee work included being the first chair person of the Write Read Write program. She also chaired the Hospitality committee and Public Policy and served wherever asked. She will be sorely missed. Not only for the tasks she performed but for her enthusiasm and her ready smile.



A donation has been made by Johnstown Branch to the AAUW national organization's Greatest Needs Fund in memory of Mary Louise Wyandt. As a librarian and because of Mary Lou's love of books, a book was purchased and inscribed with a memorial book plate for Mary Lou. This book will be donated to the Cambria County Library.

## Nominating Committee



by Mary Hays Carney  
(mhcarney241@msn.com)

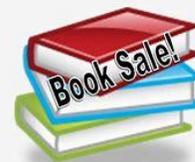
Raise your hand!

The Nominating Committee is looking for someone who would be willing to be the Chairperson of the Fundraising Committee. This position will begin in May.

We already have an excellent committee for you. The VP of Fundraising has the responsibility of working with your committee to come up ideas for raising money for our organization.

This position is a member of the Board so you also have Board members with fundraising ideas to share.

If you are interested, or have ideas for fundraising activities, please contact Mary Hays Carney 266-3852, Georgia Kerrick 244-9461 or Laryssa Duncan (609)721-3529.



by Ann Furlong (akfurlong@verizon.net)

Due to the continuation of COVID-19 restrictions, no determination has been made regarding a book sale in 2021. As soon as it is safe to do so, planning can begin. Also we are not accepting donations at this time.



by Kathy Howanek  
(khowanek@hotmail.com)

AAUW Pennsylvania  
ANNUAL MEETING  
Saturday, April 10 at  
10:00am Watch for more

information regarding the agenda and Zoom meeting registration.

## *Degree or No Degree?*

by Georgia Yeager ([gayeager@gmail.com](mailto:gayeager@gmail.com))



This is the third and last installment of “Degree or No Degree?” (Check previous newsletters for earlier opinions.) AAUW branches across the nation will vote in April on whether or not to eliminate the degree requirement. Your vote in April is important as we decide this issue. Members of our branch have opinions to share that might help you in determining how you will vote. Here are five opinions.

*I will be voting for expanding AAUW membership to encompass non-degree women. I feel women with life experiences and diverse careers could enhance AAUW goals to mentor and advance women. In addition, new members could benefit from AAUW educational opportunities and social interactions. --Bonnie Pekich*

*I am voting to maintain the degree requirement to qualify for membership. What is our purpose or goal in changing the degree requirement? If we are not university women, we would have to change our name. Our purpose is to encourage girls to pursue higher education. We should keep the university status in membership to serve as role models. --Dorothy Glass*

*We are not just another women’s group. We were founded on promoting higher education for women. I still take that to heart. I feel we should just keep it the way it is. --Lynn McCormick*

*I am writing to give my vote to remove the degree requirement for membership. Our world today is very different for women since the beginning of AAUW. Our goals state we work “to educate and support issues important to women, girls and their families”. I believe AAUW needs to be more inclusive. I feel we are missing smart, strong women in our community. I do not see the need to change our name. --Eileen Tweed*

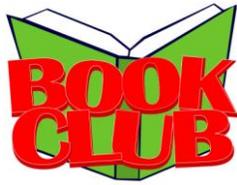
*It is recommended that we all read the explanation on the AAUW national website concerning elimination of the education requirements. We are a closed organization. We are not open to all. Yes, this makes us “special” but not welcoming. Our mission is to support women and girls. One does not have to have a degree to join in that endeavor. Welcoming everyone is the right thing to do.*

*On a more practical note, as most non-profits, AAUW relies on grants to support our mission. The National organization is refused many grants because of our closed status. This is adversely affecting the financial health of the organization.*

*Please give this important upcoming vote serious consideration. --Ann Furlong*

Watch your email for additional information on the vote. At this time, the window for voting is April 7 through May 17. National AAUW hopes to have the results available by May 19.

NOTE: Thank you to those women who stepped up to express their opinions on this matter. We need to hear from the membership; the Board needs to know what you are thinking on many issues. Please take every opportunity to voice your opinion since this kind of dialogue is healthy. In the end, regardless of how any issue is resolved, we can always agree to disagree.



## BOOKS AT THE BOULEVARD

by Georgia Yeager ([gayeager@gmail.com](mailto:gayeager@gmail.com))

It's a new year and there's a new book list for the Books at the Boulevard Book Club. We are hopeful that in the fall we can get back to the Boulevard Grill, and in the spring and summer, we can meet outside. But for now, we are meeting by Zoom. Here is our new book list with November and December still to be determined. If you see something you like, come and join us! Just email or call (255-3322) Georgia Yeager and she will add you to the Zoom invitation.

	Member	Title	Author
Feb 11	Beth Thomas	The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, the Horse	Charlie Mackesy
Mar 11	Anna Antemann	My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry	Fredrik Bachman
April 8	Paula Tomko	One Summer in Paris	Sarah Morgan
May 13	Carolyn Orr	Three Rivers Rising	Jame Richards
June 10	Pat Grzybicki	No Exit	Taylor Adams
July 8	Shellby Custer	City of Girls	Elizabeth Gilbert
August 12	Georgia Yeager	The Vanishing Half	Brit Bennett
Sept 9	Anna Antemann	The Book of Lost Names	Kristen Harmel
Oct 14	Billie Zahurak	Full Throttle	Joe Hill

### Important Membership Meeting

Don't forget to join the Zoom general membership and business meeting on **Saturday, February 27 at 1:00 pm**. The agenda and the Zoom invitation will be emailed to you.



Don't forget to like our Facebook page

[AAUW-Pa Johnstown Branch | Facebook](#)

AND to visit our website  
<http://aauwjohntown.org>

# Memership Corner

by Shellby Custer (shellbyc@aol.com)



The Membership Committee met on February 6<sup>th</sup> to set a course for 2021. We discussed options for our annual Meet and Greet event. However, at this time, we have decided to postpone the event until summer or fall 2021 due to ongoing fears related to the Coronavirus. Please start thinking about friends, coworkers, etc. whom you would like to invite to join our branch. Please contact me with any potential members or have them contact me directly

Additionally, anyone wishing to join the Membership Committee is asked to please contact me. You can reach me at (814)242-1125 via phone or text, or [shellbyc@aol.com](mailto:shellbyc@aol.com).

Many events are happening via Zoom, including programs, Book clubs, etc. and you will receive an email and a reminder call about most of these events. However, due to the Coronavirus, many of our membership events have been cancelled or postponed. Please consider reaching out to each other (you have the directory with all members' contact information) via phone, email, text, or just sending an old-fashioned card. I would also encourage us all to reach out to a member we may not have met, yet.

## Program Checklist

by Doris Leidy (dorisleidy19@gmail.com)



With the end of our AAUW fiscal year approaching, we have 2 more zoom programs planned:

**March 29, 6:30 PM** - Barbara Price, AAUW State Public Policy Chair, will present "Why Public Policy Matters?". **See program note on page 9..**

**April 26, 6:30 PM** - Brad Clemenson will speak on "Rebranding Johnstown as a Mountain Town" .

## Tuesday Book Club

by Ann Furlong (akfurlong@verizon.net)

*Nights of Rain and Stars* by Maeve Binchy will be the topic of discussion of the AAUW Tuesday Book club on **March 9, 2021 at 3:00 PM**

**On April 12, 2021 at 3:00 PM**, *The Giver of the Stars* by JoJo Moyes will be discussed.

An email will be sent out to interested members with the necessary Zoom information. If you are interested in being part of either discussion, contact Ann Furlong, (akfurlong@verizon.net)

## Where does the money go?



A look at the AAUW dues increase...

by Georgia Yeager ([gayeager@gmail.com](mailto:gayeager@gmail.com))

AAUW is an organization of high impact in many areas that affect women and girls, and our dues, along with grants and donations, support that impact. AAUW members are facing a National dues increase this July and also for the next two years (\$3, \$5, and \$5). Many of us are asking ourselves if this increase is necessary. Many of us are also asking where our dues money goes.

But first, before we get into all that, here is a breakdown of the dues you pay. Right now, out of the \$70 dues, \$59 goes to National for administrative and program costs; \$10 goes to AAUW Pennsylvania; \$1 goes to Johnstown Branch. The Branch has 78 members right now, so we get \$78 annually toward our operating costs. Obviously, that doesn't cover our needs! National and State are also feeling the pinch.

To get a good picture of all that AAUW National does with its funding, take a look at [aauw.org](http://aauw.org). Just click on various tabs. So much is happening at AAUW National – all for the good of women! That's where our money goes. Here's a partial list of activities taken from the National website ([aauw.org](http://aauw.org)):

- AAUW has given over \$115 million to over 13,000 women and nonprofit organizations around the world.
- In 2019-20, AAUW provided fellowships and grants to 259 women and community projects.
- In the 2020-2021 academic year, AAUW provided \$4 million in fellowships and grants.
- AAUW generates research and data on the pay gap, barriers and biases, STEM gap, sexual harassment, and student loan debt among other topics.
- AAUW seeks to support legislation concerning equal rights, human trafficking, reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, and Title IX.
- AAUW public policy focuses on pay equity, paid family leave, student loan debt, Title IX, and sexual harassment.

AAUW regularly submits letters to Congress, comments to regulating bodies, provides testimony before congress, and signs on to legal briefs to help advance equity. AAUW relies on its members and supporters to help drive systematic policy change, shift work cultures, and empower women.

In addition to all of the above activities, according to the State's Newsletter for Branch Presidents, in 2020, National increased on-line professional development, launched a partnership with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), financed landmark court cases, and sent 62,400 letters to Congress urging action on equity issues.

AAUW National has an agenda that requires significant financial support. Money from member dues is supplemented with grants and donations from major corporations and other groups. Part of the problem in getting grants is that AAUW is not seen as an inclusive organization because there is a degree requirement for membership. Consequently, AAUW is not eligible for funds that it could be receiving if there were no degree requirement. That requirement comes up for a national vote in April. Before then, learn all you can about AAUW's finances and reasons for wanting to drop the degree requirement.

## Education/Scholarship

by Nancy Miller (carlnanmiller@verizon.net)

We have dispersed the \$1500 awards to the four 2020 Recipients: Olivia Chappie, GJCTC; Ashley Pauley, Forest Hills; Jenifer Durica, Conemaugh Twp.; and Erin Shaffer, Richland. All had extremely successful first semesters. Olivia sent the following thank you note.

Dear Ms Miller,  
 Thank you for selecting me for the AAUW Scholarship this past year. Your generosity is truly appreciated as I work towards my future endeavors at Allegany College of Maryland. I wish you the best this year, stay safe + healthy! Thank you! Olivia Chappie

We're now in the process of identifying the 2021 scholarship awardees from Johnstown High, Windber, and Ferndale. Although our income has been scant this year, we will continue to offer the three \$1500 scholarships. However, because of Covid, we will not be having the Awards Banquet in April, but we will honor the chosen recipients in some manner.

Finally, the Literacy subcommittee will be working to evaluate Write-Read-Write for the fall and Books for Babies. Both of these programs need to be addressed. If any member would like to be on the literacy subcommittee, please contact me at [carlnanmiller@verizon.net](mailto:carlnanmiller@verizon.net).

## Public Policy

by Paula Tomko  
 (aauwpaulatomko@gmail.com)

If you are interested in helping to advance AAUW's Public Policy initiatives, the next AAUW-Johnstown Public Policy Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM on Zoom. Please email Public Policy Chair Paula Tomko at [aauwpaulatomko@gmail.com](mailto:aauwpaulatomko@gmail.com) for more information.

### March 24, 2021 is Equal Pay Day

What is equal pay day? Equal Pay Day is the date each year when a woman's earnings will equal what a man made the previous year. For every 365 days a man works, a woman must work a minimum of 448 days to earn the equivalent income. That is an extra 83 days that women must work each year. Let that sink in. Women must work an additional 83 days after the end of the calendar year to earn an income equivalent to what a man makes in just one year.

What can we do as AAUW members to combat women's financial inequality? We can contact our congressional representatives and tell them to support the following legislation:

**Paycheck Fairness Act HR7:** The House of Representatives passed the legislation with bipartisan support during the 116th Congress, but it stalled in the Senate. The bill has already been reintroduced in the 117th Congress with broad support, but quick action is needed to get this critical bill to President Biden's desk so he can sign it into law. Take action with the [AAUW Paycheck Fairness Act advocacy tool kit today](#).

**Raise the Wage Act HR603:** Raising wages has never been more urgent than during the pandemic. Frontline workers—who are disproportionately women of color—are among the most underpaid workers in the country. The continued stagnation of the minimum wage, combined with the COVID-19 crisis, has reinforced and widened racial and gender wage gaps. Act now to demand Congress [raise the minimum wage](#).



## *Increase the Minimum Wage Now*

By Jacquie Rogers, AAUW Pennsylvania State Public Policy  
Co-Chair

Imagine if you had not received a raise since 2009. This is the plight of Pennsylvania's minimum wage workers, about 60% of whom are women and many the heads of households. During the pandemic many low wage workers are deemed "essential" and are touted as "heroes" and "sheroes". So why are they not worthy of being paid a livable wage? There is no excuse for law makers to deny higher pay to thousands of the state's lowest-paid workers - and there has never been a more appropriate time.

President Joe Biden announced he would ask Congress to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$15 an hour. Pennsylvania's legislature needs to do the same. Raising the minimum wage will not hurt businesses. In a 2014 letter to Congress, 600 economists, including eight Nobel Prize winners in economics wrote: "The effect of increasing the minimum wage on employment is probably the most studied topic in labor economics, and the consensus of the literature is that moderate increases in the minimum wage has little or no negative effect on employment."

When signing the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, President Franklin Roosevelt said, "No business which depend for existence on paying less than living wage to its workers has any rights to continue in this country. By living wages, I mean more than a bare subsistence level. I mean the wage of a decent living."

To this day, the Fair Labor Standards Act remains the basic structure of labor standards. Roosevelt made it clear that the meant minimum wage to be synonymous with living wage: a wage that provides workers with the money necessary to meet their basic needs - food, shelter and essentials such as clothing, transportation and childcare.

More than 70% of Pennsylvanians favor of raising the minimum wage. Meanwhile, all of our neighboring states have not only raised their minimum wage, but have written in yearly cost-of-living increases, ensuring that Pennsylvania hourly wage earners will fall further behind every Jan. 1.

In 1914, Henry Ford doubled the pay of his employees to \$5 a day. Ford was not a humanitarian, but rather he saw that his workers were not buying his cars because they couldn't afford them. He also reasoned that his workers would be more productive and reliable if they were paid fairly.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and her husband, economist George Akerlof, presented a research study in 1990 known as the "Fair-Wage Hypothesis," in which they determined that when workers feel they are being paid a fair wage they are more productive. Their data shows that more productive and efficient workers means less labor costs for employers because they don't have to hire as many people, pay as much overtime, and spend money on retraining.

A 2019 Fuller Project report observed that in seven states that paid regular minimum wage to tipped restaurant workers, the poverty level for those workers fell to 11% as compared to 18% in other states.

Economic benefits to state and federal governments are substantial. Lowering the cost of public assistance, coupled with the ability of workers to have greater purchasing power, add millions to state revenue, while giving families previously living below

## Celebrating Women's History Month with Vice President Kamala Harris

by Laryssa Duncan (laryssa54@hotmail.com)



Women's History Month is one of the most important events on the calendar for AAUW. Using our core mission of advancing equity, we celebrate the history of women's struggles and triumphs, then and now.

Clara Barton, Katherine Johnson, Jane Goodall—all achieved success in their chosen fields and advanced the cause for equity among their peers. Kamala Harris brought to fruition many of the dreams and ambitions of women before her when she became the first woman to be elected Vice President of the United States of America. She also became the first African-American, and the first Asian American to hold the office.

Vice President Harris was highly successful in the fields of law and politics before holding the second highest office in the land. She became the District Attorney of San Francisco in 2004 and then Attorney General of California in 2011. In 2017, she entered national politics when she won the U.S. Senate seat for California, replacing Senator Barbara Boxer. She then ran for President of the United States in the 2020 election but withdrew for lack of funds.

Joe Biden chose her as the vice-presidential nominee later that year, again making history as the first African-American to run for the position. Nora Ephron said, "I hope that you find some way to break the rules and make a little trouble out there. And I also hope that you will choose to make some of that trouble on behalf of women." Vice President Harris has caused some good trouble along the way on her path to the vice-presidency, proving that one can overcome many of the barriers traditionally placed upon women—gender, race, economic status—and still succeed in her chosen path both in life and in work.



## *March Branch Meeting - "Why Public Policy Matters"*

by Paula Tomko (aauwpaulatomko@gmail.com)

For 20 years, Barbara Price was Executive Director of the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence, a statewide coalition of 28 domestic violence programs. She was responsible for financial management, development and grant writing. She has extensive public speaking experience at conferences, before the legislature, on television, and radio and represented the Coalition on state government committees and task forces. Over the years, she was able to secure significant changes in how government systems responded to victims of domestic violence and recognition of the Coalition as the leading organization in New Jersey for domestic violence resources and expertise.

Barbara has also been active in the American Association of University Women for 45 years, serving in various board positions at both the state and local level. She is currently Public Policy Chair of the Lower Bucks Branch of AAUW, Public Policy Chair of AAUW-PA and serves on the national AAUW Public Policy Committee. Long an advocate for women's rights, Barbara has done presentations on At Ease with ERA and marched in Washington for the Equal Rights Amendment. **March 29, 6:30 PM - Barbara Price, AAUW State Public Policy Chair, will present "Why Public Policy Matters?" by Zoom to our branch!**

## *Tips for Using Zoom*

By Georgia Yeager (gayeager@gmail.com)



To make the Zoom experience good for you and others in the meeting, follow these guidelines:

1. If you have never used Zoom before, you need to go to the App Store and download Zoom if you are using a tablet or phone (with camera and speakers). Choose Zoom for meetings.
2. If you are using a computer (with a camera and speakers), you can go to [zoom.us](https://zoom.us) to download the free app.
3. Another way to get the app is to just click on the invitation link sent to you by the host. Once you click on the link, it will guide you in downloading the app.
4. When you get to the Zoom site, it may ask you to "Allow." Click on "Allow" to join the meeting.
5. The host must admit you to the meeting, so be patient. (If you are forgotten, call the host to remind her to let you in! lol)
6. When you enter the meeting, your audio and video need to be turned on. Run your cursor over the bottom left of your screen or the top, and you will see two small icons, one that is a video camera and one that is a microphone. If there is a RED LINE through either one, click on it to turn on the video and/or audio.
7. If you don't need to talk, MUTE yourself by clicking on that microphone. You can click on it again to UNMUTE when you need to talk. NOTE: That will keep out unnecessary noise on your part: phone ringing, conversations with family, etc. Remember that when you talk, we can all hear you if you are not muted.
8. Look at the box on the screen that is yours – make sure your face is in it and that your camera is not tilted to the ceiling or the floor.

Zoom is here to stay, or some software like it. Jump on board and join us for meetings and programs. If you are feeling isolated and don't Zoom, consider buying yourself an iPad or tablet or upgrading your phone. (If your family uses iPhones, an iPad will allow you to FaceTime, a very easy face-to-face software built into Apple products.) A pandemic is a tough time to be isolated!

## **In Memoriam Donations**

As you read in the memorial for Mary Lou Wyandt, a book was purchased in her name for the Cambria County Library. Laryssa Duncan, an AAUW member and reference librarian at the Cambria County Library, has indicated that anyone can dedicate such a memorial to Mary Lou or to anyone else. Send a check made out to the library. Specify that it is a memorial donation for (person's name) and if you want an acknowledgement sent to you from the library for the donation. Most donations are given in \$25 increments and can be specified for one or two or more books.