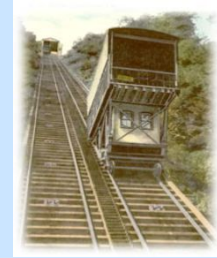




# Inclined to AAUW



March/April, 2024

Volume XXX, No. 2 Page 1



## *Celebration Finale*



The Johnstown Branch AAUW celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a variety of ways last year. The finale of our celebration was held at the Franklin St. Church at 6:00 PM on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2023. This is the exact date of the first meeting of the Johnstown Branch AAUW, being held at the exact location with a potluck dinner as in 1923.

An interesting part of the program was the video of our 50+ year members. Their words are important for every girl or woman to hear. Go to [AAUW 50 Year Membership Recognition \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...) to watch.

Thanks to the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee who organized this memorable event!





By Kenna Raymond  
[kennaraymond@gmail.com](mailto:kennaraymond@gmail.com)

It has been awhile, but Thirsty Thursday is back! We will meet at Nykos, 935 Scalp Ave. at 6:00 PM on April 4, 2024.

A reminder that members are encouraged to bring family/friends and that you can order coffee, a drink, an appetizer or a meal.

The reason for the gathering is to enjoy each other's company and engage in good conversation and FUN!



by Ann Furlong  
[akfurlong@verizon.net](mailto:akfurlong@verizon.net)

## AAUW Dining Group

The Dining Group will be heading to Windber in the Spring. On Wednesday, March 13 we will dine at Rizzo's, 2200 Graham Ave. April 17 will see us at D'Arc's Pizza Shop at 2013 Graham Avenue. The time is 5:45.

Family and friends are most welcome. The more the better. We had 22 people signed up for our lovely Christmas dinner at Harrigan's. Please consider joining in on the fellowship if you have never come or have not been with us lately.



By Ann Furlong  
[akfurlong@verizon.net](mailto:akfurlong@verizon.net)

A new year means a new book sale, which means a new collection period. This book collection period will run from April 19 to May 18. So please be ready to say "yes", if you are asked to pick up books from collection points or are asked to help with sorting and packing. We can always use more hands.

As a reminder, the sorting and packing now takes place at First Lutheran Church, 415 Vine Street. The times will be the same as in the past: 1:00-3:00 Mondays and Thursdays. Our sales have been so successful the past several years. Keep up the good work, gals!

The Book Sale will be held on August 7, 8, 9 and 10 with set up on the 5th and 6th. Mark your calendars so that you will know to be ready to help. This week is a very special time for all of us.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in April.

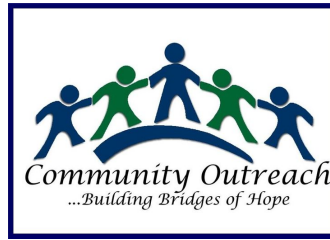
Johnstown Branch AAUW Website  
<http://www.aauwjohntown.org>

The password to access the "members only" section is **lbelong21**



<https://www.facebook.com/paauw/>

Cambria County Memory Project  
[American Association of University Women](#)  
[Cambria Memory Project](#)



In keeping with our mission statement, our Johnstown Branch has been actively pursuing community service projects that might interest our members. On October 18<sup>th</sup>, during our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dinner, members donated diapers for the United Way of the Laurel Highlands Diaper Hubs.

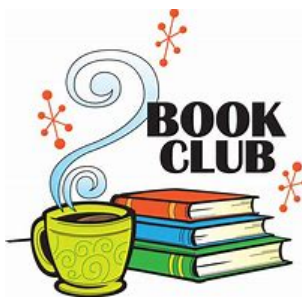
The 14 Diaper Hubs throughout the region supply bundles of 25 diapers for each infant and toddler in a family, every 30 days. These Diaper Hubs ensure the well-being of children, while providing growing families much needed financial support.

On February 10<sup>th</sup>, at our Business Meeting members donated canned and non-perishable food items for the Franklin St. Church's food bank. Food banks are another important means of uplifting our community.

Last year a group of our members helped pack food into backpacks for the Cambria County Backpack Project. Watch your emails, as we are planning to schedule another volunteer effort with this organization



AAUW members Eileen Tweed and Carol Keppel deliver donated diapers



## Second Tuesday Book Group

by Ann Furlong [akfurlong@verizon.net](mailto:akfurlong@verizon.net)

The Second Tuesday Book Group will meet at the home of Georgia Kerrick, 369 Bliss Street on March 12. The book is *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman.

On April 9 Deanna Haddle will host at Classic Elements, 345 Main Street. The book is *The Magnolia Palace* by Fiona Davis. We will gather at 1:00PM.

## “Like”, “Comment” and “Share”

If you are a Facebook user, be sure to check out the [AAUW-Pa Johnstown Branch](#) Facebook page.

We have great articles identifying and celebrating women role models, exciting membership recruiting ads and pictures. All of our events are posted on this page. We need you to “like”, “comment” and “share” so that our efforts can be shared to your friends and the community at large.



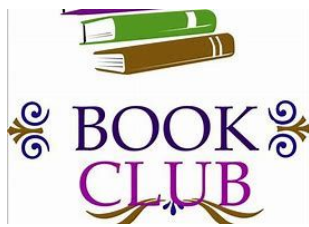
Our February 10<sup>th</sup> Branch meeting included a presentation by Karen Strubel Myers, President & CEO of United Way of the Laurel Highlands, that enlightened our AAUW membership on the ALICE project . ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed — households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold).

Karen’s presentation opened our eyes to the challenges in our own community. In 2021, 33% of Cambria households were below the ALICE Threshold. Explaining the impact economically and socially to these households and to our community at large was certainly an eye-opening experience. Thank you. Karen!

Learn more at <https://www.unitedwaysa.org/alice-project?>



Karen Strubel Myers



Books at the Boulevard  
by Shellby Custer (shellbvc@aol.com)

Spring is **springing!** (Or so the groundhog proclaimed). And so are the conversations and friendships in Bookclub.

Books at the Boulevard will continue to meet at the Boulevard Grill the second Thursday of each month at 6pm. Anyone wishing to attend/join us please let me or Pat Grzybicki ([dsap@atlanticbb.net](mailto:dsap@atlanticbb.net)) know so that we can add you to our reservation.

Here are the upcoming books (The booklist can also be found in your Membership Directory)

**Again, anyone wishing to attend, please let us know so that we can make the proper reservations and arrangements**

March 14	Angry Housewives Eating Bonbons: A Novel	Lora Landvik	Jennifer Batche
April 11	West with Giraffes: A Novel	Lynda Rutledge	Karen Rizzo
May 9	The Star-Crossed Sisters of Tuscany	Lori Nelson Spielman	Claire Montoya

## *“Programs to Tickle Your Intellectual Curiosity”*

By Dr. Valerie Grash (vgrash@pitt.edu)

That rascally rodent Punxsutawney Phil claimed Spring was right around the corner, so the Program committee is ready to provide members with stimulating events to get you out of hibernation in the weeks to come:

**On Thursday, February 29**, Yamila Audisio Orlovsky (former assistant curator at JAHA and currently pursuing a master’s degree in history from Slippery Rock while working as Communications Assistant at The Learning Lamp) will present a talk from **6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Cambria County Library Community Room**. A native of Argentina, she will discuss her pursuit of citizenship with a talk entitled **“Myth vs. Reality: My Long Journey to US Citizenship.”** She may even test us with questions from the citizenship exam.

March is Women’s History month, so on Wednesday, **March 20, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Cambria County Library Community Room**, Dr. Valerie Grash will present the first in a series of talks on **Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives**. Our topic this date will be Edith Warner, a simple Quaker schoolteacher from Philadelphia who, for health reasons, moved to Otowi Crossing, New Mexico in the late 1920s and endured tremendous economic hardship in the years during and after the Great Depression. In her desolate little house-turned tearoom—with no electricity and minimal comforts—she entertained Robert Oppenheimer and many of the scientists at Los Alamos secretly working on the atom bomb in the 1940s. She also developed close relationships with the residents of the nearby San Ildefonso pueblo, including the acclaimed potter, Maria Martinez. More talks in this series will be offered by various speakers soon, so keep an eye on your email and upcoming newsletters.

**On Saturday, April 13, from 9:30-11:00 a.m.**, AAUW will host a roundtable discussion, **“The Economic Impact of Women-Led Arts Organizations on Johnstown’s Revitalization,”** at the **John Murtha Center at UPJ**. Participants include women leading the charge in this endeavor, representing not just non-profits and businesses, but also political representatives and others. This promises to be an excellent opportunity to engage both the university community and the general public. More details will be forthcoming as our committee is still hard at work putting together all the moving parts, but reserve the date now!

In the May-June newsletter, we will provide more details about our **end-of-year business meeting** which, once again, will be a potluck affair at **Hemlock Pavilion in Windber Rec Park. It will be held on Monday, May 20.**

As always, we are interested in new ideas for programs—and new committee members to join our merry group.

## YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Dr. Debe Mack ([debemack@gmail.com](mailto:debemack@gmail.com))

We are delighted to announce the return of Loretta Ciupak to our Johnstown branch. Loretta, who holds a BA in Professional Studies Business Administration from Elizabethtown College, was initially a member starting in 1993. Throughout her membership, she significantly contributed to various facets of the organization, including programming, hospitality, finance, bridge club, book sale, and organizational aid. Notably, her exceptional service earned her the Educational Foundation Honors award in 2010. We warmly welcome Loretta back and extend our gratitude for her renewed commitment to advancing equity for women and girls. Her return brings our current membership total to 72.

February marks the beginning of our social media membership campaign, set to run every Monday for 12 weeks, concluding with the Spring Shape the Future event. We encourage everyone to engage with our posts on Facebook by liking and sharing them to enhance our community visibility. Should you encounter an interested individual, please forward their information to me, and I will promptly send them our prospective member packet.

Additionally, the **AAUW Pennsylvania conference**, "Evolution of the Fight: Looking Back to Move Forward," is approaching and will take place from **April 5-7, 2024**. **There are early registration discounts for both the hotel (deadline: March 1) and the conference (deadline: March 15).**

Sincerely,

Debe Mack Membership



By Dr. Debe Mack ([debemack@gmail.com](mailto:debemack@gmail.com))

Don't forget our used jewelry sale!

Thanks to everyone who brought in jewelry; additional donations can be coordinated with Debe Mack. Our first sale will be March 9 & 10 at Johnstown Mason Temple 10am-4pm each day.



## Spotlight on Women Business Enterprises

As a means of honoring Women's History Month and area women entrepreneurs, our Branch will highlight Women Business Enterprises on Facebook during March. A WBE is 51% owned by a woman, or a group of women responsible for daily operations of a for-profit business. **Please like and share these posts. We will be asking the participating businesses to like and share AAUW posts/events.**



By Madeline Gyure ( [madelinegyure@gmail.com](mailto:madelinegyure@gmail.com) )

The Education Committee met at The Morning Grind on January 5<sup>th</sup> , and plans to meet there again on March 15<sup>th</sup> .

A warm welcome to two new AAUW members who have joined this Committee: Beth Stern and Rachelle Hrabosky. Each has a strong background in the educational field. Beth has agreed to be the liaison for the Minority Scholar Program.

2024 High School scholarships will be awarded to students from Conemaugh Township, Greater Johnstown, and Windber High Schools. For the first time, we are partnering with the Western Pa. Princeton Alumni Association and AAUW member, Laura Huchel, to present the Princeton Book Award to a high school junior.

The March meeting will focus on discussing whether the high school rotation and/or scholar selection process should be modified. Any proposed changes will be shared with members in advance of recommendations to the Board.

This year we plan on participating in a community-wide program, "Hope Springs Eternal: The Holocaust Project". Becky Catalinet is the Community project manager. Madeline Gyure and Kathy Howanek will be the AAUW contact persons for AAUW's part in this project. Currently four other members have agreed to assist in planning community-wide book displays and discussions on books having to do with women in the Holocaust. More details on this project will be forthcoming, and additional volunteers are welcome. We hope to complete our project by September.



## Should AAUW drop the degree requirement?

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

AAUW National is again suggesting that we open membership and that we drop the degree requirement. This issue has been presented to the national membership twice before, and nationally, the degree requirement has remained in place by only a very slim margin. In many ways the future viability of AAUW hinges on our vote this spring.

Voting starts in April and ends May 15. **You will receive an email from Shannon Wolfe that will enable you to cast your vote.** Watch your In-Box, and don't delete anything from Shannon! We had a good percentage of our branch voting two years ago. Let's do it again!

In the meantime, think about your vote and what it means to our Branch and to National.

Here are some of the Pro's and Con's of the argument:

### **PRO** – Drop the degree requirement; allow open membership

- AAUW will be more inclusive of other women. There are many talented, community-minded women who would make our organization stronger and who do not have degrees.
- It makes sense in Johnstown to make ourselves more relevant to our community which has a lower percentage of women with degrees. We would be more representative of our community.
- AAUW still maintains its name, mission, activities, and interest in higher education for women and girls.
- AAUW National will have greater eligibility for grant money from corporations and foundations if we are more inclusive. It is extremely important that National find sources of income other than dues in order to continue to operate, to offer opportunities such as scholarships and fellowships to women and girls, and to maintain its research and advocacy activities.
- AAUW Johnstown Branch was founded 100 years ago to give like-minded women an opportunity to come together for academic and cultural pursuits. Society has changed. The degree is no longer necessary to make us like-minded, and our mission is broader.

### **CON** – Maintain the degree requirement

- AAUW will no longer be different from other women groups if we allow members without degrees. Our members are university women.
- It has always been this way.

This is a lopsided argument. If you have arguments not listed here, please phone me or email me your thoughts for inclusion in the May newsletter. [gayeager@gmail.com](mailto:gayeager@gmail.com); 814-255-3322



# President's Message



By Kathy Howanek ([khowanek@hotmail.com](mailto:khowanek@hotmail.com))

Hello from semi-sunny Florida!

Just some quick notes to keep you posted on recent board and membership activities. At the January Board meeting it was announced that UPJ has successfully become an AAUW College/University Affiliate. This process was completed following the efforts of UPJ Vice President of Student Affairs, Christian Stumpf. Dr. Stumpf has appointed Joyce Radovanic and Dr. Nina Girard as C/U liaisons to our branch. An initial meeting was held to discuss the next steps. It is important that we have a plan to program for students.

At the board meeting, a proposed 2024-25 budget was developed to present to the membership. The board also chose the recipients of the following awards:

**Member Making a Difference:** For stepping forward and coordinating the 100th Anniversary Celebration, **Dr. Nina Girard.**

**Outstanding Woman:** For taking on any job asked of her since she joined in 2011, from book sale, to Write-Read-Write, to initiating the acquisition of a place for us to sort and store books, **Heidi Staib.**

**Named Gift:** For exemplary performance as Program V.P. in spite of many obstacles, **Dr. Valerie Grash.**

**Gateway to Equity:** For dedication to and leadership in public education, particularly her role in the successful lawsuit against the Commonwealth, leading to reform in funding for K-12 public education, **Dr. Amy Arcurio.**

At the February membership meeting, the membership was presented with the proposed budget to be voted on in May. The membership also voted to approve an amendment to the Branch bylaws, adding the position of one College/University liaison to the Board and eliminating Historian as a Board member.



**MARCH 2024**

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Tues Book Club 1:00	13 Dining Group Rizzos	14 Books @ Boulevard 6:00	15 Last day to register for State Conference	16
17	18	19	20 Program CCL 6-7	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 						

**APRIL 2024**

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 Thirsty Thursday Nykos 6:00	5 PA Conferenc e	6 PA Conference
7 PA Conference	8	9 Tues Book Club 1:00	10	11 Books @ Boulevard 6:00	12	13 Program UPJ 9:30- 11:30 AM
14	15	16	17 Dining Group D'Arc Pizza	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				