



Branch

Banter

OCTOBER 2023

CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF THE YWCA

WHEN: Tuesday, October 10 7:00 p.m.
Social time 6:30 PM Business meeting follows program

WHERE: York Alliance Church, 501 Rathton Road, York

PROGRAM: Edquina Washington serves as the Chief Impact Officer at YWCA York. Previously she served as the Community Development & Housing Director for Crispus Attucks York and Director of Community Relations for the City of York. She currently serves as Vice President of York City Council. In that capacity, she serves as Chair of the Police & Fire and Economic & Community Development Committees of Council and as a member of the Public Works and Rules and Administrative Code Committees.

She has authored and introduced Safe Time Legislation, expanding the sick leave policy for City of York employees that are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and similar concerns (unanimously adopted, August 2018). Most recently, in collaboration with the City of York Human Relations Commission, she authored and introduced The C.R.O.W.N. Act (Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair), prohibiting race-based hair discrimination (unanimously adopted, May 2022).

She holds a Master of Science degree in Human Services (Capella University) and a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice (York College of PA).

Light refreshments and water will be available. You may provide your own beverage if you wish.

You are encouraged to bring a friend.

Lois Conaway & Carol Heintzeman, Program Co-Vice Presidents

USED BOOK SALE A SUCCESS!

Thanks to all who contributed to the success of the book sale at last month's Branch meeting. We raised approximately \$200.

Linda Palmer, Book Group

FROM THE PODIUM

My wish as I write this when we are having sunny days and cool evenings is that we may continue to enjoy such delightful weather throughout the rest of the Autumn.

I have been reading mysteries and tales of espionage, leavened by serious general fiction. In one of the latter, I came upon a parable. A young boy walking came upon a stiff blind horse. He does not want to leave him, does not know how to help and, also wanting to keep going, he starts to talk himself into caring less. Not wanting his heart to break, he makes himself immune to the pain of the horse. Then he says, "He must be wicked to deserve such pain."

Carol Anderson, President

BOARD MEETING

The October 3 Board meeting will be conducted virtually using Zoom. Carol will email the agenda prior to the meeting, which will begin at 10:00 a.m. Branch members are welcome to attend Board meetings.

DISPOSABLE UNDERWEAR DRIVE

THIS WAS THE BEST YEAR EVER! Packages of incontinence products packed my spacious trunk and filled the back seat of my Camry. As I unloaded the packages at Representative Carol Hill-Evans' office, her assistants, and my husband, Tom, and I made several trips back and forth, until a small mountain of products filled the outer area of her office.

We have been helping families in need of disposable underwear since 2017, but inflation makes the problem more serious for struggling families. Thank you for your generous support of this important community project.

Betty Hooker

2023-2024 YEARBOOKS

2023-2024 Yearbooks were distributed at the August picnic and the September meeting. Unclaimed *Yearbooks* will be mailed to members after the October meeting.

Kudos to Sue McMillan for her help with the *Yearbooks*. After proofreading the books, Sue oversaw the printing of the books at York College and stapled them together at her home. Then she helped distribute the *Yearbooks* at the September meeting.

Sue is an example of the many members who work tirelessly to make the routine and special work of the York Branch possible. Please thank Sue for all she does for the York Branch.

Betty Hooker, Yearbook Chair

AAUW FUND

Each year, AAUW invites hundreds of college women from around the United States for three days of leadership training, inspiration and networking at the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL). NCCWSL was founded more than three decades ago and has attracted over 10,000 student leaders.

This past fiscal year, the York Branch provided a scholarship to a Penn State York student to attend NCCWSL in June, 2023. To help provide funds for a 2024 scholarship, the York Branch will be participating in Boscov's 'Friends Helping Friends' fundraiser. The \$5.00 discount shopping pass entitles the customer to save up to 25% off the lowest sale price. The event will be held Wednesday, October 18, from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. This would be a perfect time to purchase some Christmas gifts for your family and friends. Your shopping pass may be purchased at the October 10 Branch meeting. All \$5.00 will help support the York Branch NCCWSL scholarship.

Jane Long, AAUW Fund Chair

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

According to 2022 statistics from Statista (the go-to source for businesses, governments, academics, and other entities that rely on accurate, reliable data) and the Southern Poverty Law Center, Pennsylvania is one of the top ten states with hate groups. Pennsylvania has 21 Hate Groups and 51 Antigovernment Groups.

The Southern Law Center has defined a hate group as “an organization or collection of individuals that – based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities – has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics. An organization does not need to have engaged in criminal conduct or have followed their speech with actual unlawful action to be labeled as a hate group. Hate groups vilify others because of their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity.”

An antigovernment group, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, is “an organization or collection of individuals that – based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities – believes the federal government is tyrannical and traffics in conspiracy theories about an illegitimate government of leftist elites seeking a ‘New World Order’. In the past, this movement was referred to as the “Patriot” movement by adherents and critics.”

These statistics should remind us of the importance of educating ourselves about the issues of hate and discrimination. The DEI Committee's goal is to assist our members in providing that education and awareness.

Please join us for our next DEI Committee meeting on Tuesday, October 17, 10:30 a.m. via Zoom. An agenda will be sent before the meeting.

Rita Meisenhelder & Barbara Woodmansee, DEI Co-Chairs

EDUCATION ISSUES ACTION GROUP

Your Role in Fixing PA Unconstitutional Public-School Funding **This affects you if you pay property taxes or rent to a landlord who does!**

Court decision: The PA Constitution requires that **every student must have equal opportunities to a quality public education, and it is up to the Governor and Legislature to respond to this need** to close the gap between wealthy and poorer districts.

In PA, **local property taxes** bear brunt of schools' budgets; **when schools are underfunded by the state, local boards either must raise taxes or make cuts in programs**. High property taxes hit senior citizens and rural districts particularly hard.

To address this, a bipartisan BEFC (Basic Education Funding Commission) was set up to review the funding formula and **determine how much each district needs** to fulfill the educational requirements in the Constitution.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. The BEFC should:

1. Set adequacy targets, based on what is needed
2. Include Pre-K, Special Ed, facilities, transportation
3. Set state share targets, closing the gap in low wealth districts
4. Lay out a reasonable timeline: 3-5 years, and include adjustments for inflation.

How you can help:

In 1st phase (now): Build public and political will. Legislators do not feel need to change, and will not just because a judge says so. Make them understand that we do not accept this. *Lawmakers respond more to thoughtful comments, not form letters, so*

1. **Write your own statement and email to Governor Shapiro and the BEFC.***
2. Attend the hearings if possible
3. **Write a letter to the editor.***
4. Follow *PA Schools Work* on Facebook and Twitter, and share their posts.
5. **Write an email to your state representative and senator.** Introduce yourself and share why you think adequate funding for equitable education is important to you.*
6. Attend the *PA Schools Work* rally in Harrisburg on November 14, where legislative visits may occur.

** If you need ideas or talking points, contact me.

Concerned about book bans and censorship in schools?

Please join other AAUW members and our partner organization, the League of Women Voters, for this important webinar.

Click the link below to register:

[Webinar: Censorship in Schools: What Can You Do?](#)

Tuesday, October 3 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Carol Little, EIA Group Chair

CHECK OUT THE CANDIDATES AND VOTE – NOVEMBER 7

Voters will be choosing judges, municipal officials and school board members in the election on Tuesday, November 7.

- Find voting information at:
<https://www.vote.pa.gov/Register-to-Vote/Pages/default.aspx>
- The last date to register to vote is October 23.
- The last date to request a mail-in or absentee ballot is October 31.
- **The deadline for the county election office to receive mail-in and absentee ballots is 8 p.m. on November 7.**

Betty Hooker, Get Out the Vote Chair

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Due to new problems with the Dual Enrollment Program, the Committee is discussing other options for revamping the scholarship program. Information will be presented to the Branch later this month.

Nancy Spataro, HESC Chair

PUBLIC POLICY

Looking at the 118th Congress, the reality is that Congress is divided with different parties in the House and Senate. This can make getting to a consensus difficult. However, national AAUW will not sit back and wait. They will continue to work on legislation that affects women & girls. The legislation AAUW will be tracking over the next year and half includes: The Family Act, which addresses paid leave; The Health Families Act, which addresses sick leave; Legislation to address college affordability and student debt; The Gender Equity in Education Act; The Equality Act addressing LGBTQ+ discrimination; and Equal Right Amendment (ERA). In regard to the ERA, AAUW is focused on getting legislators to sign the discharge petition House Joint Resolution 25 (H.J. Res.25). This would allow a vote on the resolution to remove the ratification deadline and affirm the Equal Rights Amendment as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution. AAUW PA has contacted the two Pennsylvania Legislators to ensure that all of PA's representatives who cosponsored the resolution were on the discharge petition.

Carol Heintzelman, Public Policy Chair

BANTER DEADLINE

October 24 is the deadline for articles for the November *Banter*.

BOOK GROUP

3rd Wednesdays 1:00 p.m. Contact Linda Palmer

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 18, at 1:00 p.m., at Olive Garden.

October 18: *Hang the Moon* by Jeannette Walls

If you are interested in joining a discussion, you can request a list of discussion questions.

BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group will meet Wednesday, October 6, at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Lois Kulp. Please bring a sandwich for lunch. Hostess for November 1 is Janet Misiolek. New players and subs are welcome at any time.

For information, call Lois Kulp.

LUNCH A MONTH

All are welcomed to gather on **Thursday, October 19, at 1:00 p.m.**, at Wyndridge Farm Restaurant. It is a good time to chat with other members and get to know each other better, in addition to enjoying a pleasant lunch together.

Please sign up on the clipboard at our October Branch meeting, or contact Martha Fleischer by October 17 if you plan to attend or have any questions. Hope to see you there!

SUNSHINE

If you know of an AAUW member who deserves a card due to illness, death in family, or thinking of you, please notify Linda Rupert.

Mission Statement

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

Vision Promise

By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that women have a fair chance.

Diversity Statement

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.