



Branch

Banter

MARCH 2024

FROM *DEVIL IN DOVER* TO MOMS FOR LIBERTY: HOW DID WE GET HERE?

WHEN: Tuesday, March 12 7:00 p.m.
Social time 6:30 PM Business meeting follows program

WHERE: York Alliance Church, 501 Rathton Road, York

PROGRAM: Our speaker tonight will be Lauri Lebo, the author of *The Devil in Dover: An Insider's Story of Dogma v. Darwin in Small-town America*. Lauri serves as the Southern Region Advocacy Coordinator for the Pennsylvania State Education Association. Also a journalist, she was the principal local reporter covering the case of *Kitzmiller v. Dover* in 2004-05. Her book is about the trial of the intelligent design movement and its effects on Dover.

Lois Conaway & Carol Heintzeman, Program Co-Vice Presidents

FROM THE PODIUM

We are indebted to Amber Majeske for proposing that Ariele Walker serve with us as an intern. Ariele is to give our Branch much needed support in the establishment of a systemized annual Program schedule and with the work of the Higher Education Scholarship Committee.

A non-traditional student of 39 years, Ariele holds an Associate Degree in Education and will graduate in May with a Bachelor Degree in Human Development and Family Studies from Penn State-York. As the owner of Perfect Hands Home Care, a group she purposefully keeps small, she presently manages 40 staff for 10 clients. She has over 15 years of experience working with elderly clients, for some of whom she has provided personal care. Her goal is to show patients a brighter side of home care and to ensure they are able to continue to live life to its fullest. She tells me she enjoys traveling, spending time with friends and family, eating foods from around the world and anticipates the birth of her first children in July, twins.

Carol Anderson, President

BOARD MEETING

The March 5 Board meeting will be conducted virtually using Zoom. Carol will email the agenda prior to the meeting, which will begin at 7:00 p.m. Branch members are welcome to attend

SPRING WILL BE UPON US SOON, AS WILL YORK BRANCH'S

Spring for Scholarships Luncheon

Bring your friends, family, and spouse for an afternoon of delicious food, great entertainment, and fun at the Country Club of York. Doors open at noon on Sunday, April 28. There will also be a silent auction and an art sale featuring local artists. Proceeds will support the AAUW York Branch scholarship fund.

Nancy Buckley, Fundraising Committee Chair

GET TICKETS ON MARCH 12:

Bring your order to our March Branch meeting and purchase your tickets at that time.

NEEDED: ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES AND ART

This year's *Spring for Scholarships* fundraiser will include a **Silent Auction** with an **Art Corner** and antiques and collectibles. Baskets of themed items, wine, gift cards, etc., are welcome. We are asking all contributors to place a minimum bid on their donations. All payments must be made by cash or check. We are not equipped to accept credit cards.

Calling all artists, downsizers, art lovers!

Carol Little is putting together the Art Corner. If you have a piece of art that you are willing to donate for the Silent Auction, please contact her. We will have room for 8-12 pieces, depending on size. Carol will collect the art now through April 27, but will need information on it (size, artist, title if known) by April 21.

If you have any questions or wish to contribute suitable items, please contact Carol Little or Betty Hooker.

BRANCH AWARDS

Two awards will be presented at our March Branch meeting.

Lois Conaway, Awards Chair

BANTER DEADLINE

March 26 is the deadline for articles for the April *Banter*.

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.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

We have a new member! Carol Eicher recently joined our York Branch. She is a daughter of Doris Cohen who was a dedicated and active member for many years. Carol has an MBA from York College and BSE from the University of PA. She is a trustee at YCP and is interested in collaborating with us to consider how we can honor her mother's legacy.

AAUW National Board urges a vote (April 2-May 5) in favor of the proposed bylaw amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for membership. They note, "The change will align our membership practices with our purpose of advancing equity for women and girls and enable us to include members with the diverse backgrounds and perspectives needed to achieve our purpose in today's world."

Did you know that new members who join at a meeting or event pay Half Price for national dues, saving \$36.00? When you invite others to join our Branch at a meeting or the upcoming Spring Luncheon on April 28, mention this opportunity. Our new membership form with full information is available at our meetings to take and share with potential members.

Joan Beekey & Martha Fleischer, Membership Co-Vice Presidents

EDUCATION ISSUES ACTION GROUP

Good News for PA students in Gov. Shapiro's budget proposal for 2024-2025

\$1,072,000,000 Increase in Basic Education Funding follows the recommendations of the bipartisan Basic Education Funding Commission (BEFC) to address Pennsylvania's unconstitutional school funding system.

- \$736,000,000 targeted to school districts that are inadequately funded
- \$136,000,000 targeted to school districts with high property taxes to promote tax equity
- \$ 200 million through the basic education funding line to be distributed to all 500 districts.
- \$7 million for dual enrollment students

Cyber Charter School Funding Reform

The Governor proposes establishing a statewide cyber charter tuition rate of \$8,000 per student per year (current range is \$8,639 - \$26,564 per student per year). Enacting this reform is estimated to save school districts \$262,000,000 annually.

There will be negotiation as the budget moves through the legislature, since the Republicans do not think that amount of money is necessary. But we hope that this proposal will be adopted *without a new voucher program* that funnels public tax funds to private and religious schools that can discriminate, and which would undermine this investment in our public schools.

Carol Little, EIA Group Chair

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) shapes every aspect of our lives and society, from government regulations, corporate policies, career growth, and economic disparity to access to education.

The DEI Committee will continue discussions and awareness of these issues. Please join us for our next meeting on Monday, March 18, at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom.

Rita Meisenhelder & Barbara Woodmansee, DEI Co-Chairs

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

As we all know, our AAUW York Branch has discussed the importance of collaborating with members of the York community in an effort to make us more visible and even increase our membership. **Now there are two opportunities to engage in community collaborations.**

Many of you knew Doris Cohen, a long time York Branch member who passed away several years ago. She was a strong proponent of STEM programs for women. Our Branch named one of our scholarships after Doris. The scholarship was specific for those interested in science and engineering careers. Carol Eicher, Doris's daughter, wants to collaborate with us and also consider ways we can honor her mother's legacy. Carol lives out of town, but is on the York College Board of Trustees. She would like to meet with some of our members to explore ways we can collaborate. The best time for her to meet is when she is in town for the York College Board of Trustees meeting. She has suggested Thursday, May 9, any time after 12 noon, and Friday, May 10, any time after 2:00 p.m. If anyone is interested in meeting with Carol, please contact Barbara Woodmansee and indicate which day you prefer. The good news is Carol Eicher is now a new member of our Branch!

Another opportunity for our Branch to connect with our community is meeting with York College students from the Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) Club. We have been invited to attend one of their club meetings. The invitation states that "we are interested in having an informal event where our club members can have discussions with the AAUW ladies to learn their stories and ask questions about life. We will probably have a light snack and craft to work on during the meeting." The WiSE Club would like 5-7 members to attend a meeting on Thursday, April 4, or Wednesday, April 10. We can meet at 7-8 p.m., 5-6 p.m., or 6-7 p.m. If you are interested, please contact Barbara Woodmansee and indicate which date and times work best for you. A few of the Club members attended our December luncheon.

These opportunities are important ways for our Branch to have an impact on our community as well as future generations.

Barbara Woodmansee & Rita Meisenhelder, DEI Co-Chairs

PUBLIC POLICY

The following items reflect activities of AAUW at the national level:

1. Federal pay data collection is a critical tool for identifying pay discrimination and working to close pervasive gender and racial pay gaps in the United States. AAUW joined coalition partners in urging the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to swiftly reinstate EEO-1 pay data collection, which requires employers to report employees' pay information disaggregated by sex and race.
2. When Congress temporarily expanded the Child Tax Credit (CTC) through December 2021 to include millions of families previously ineligible because the parents made too LITTLE, child poverty in the U.S. was reduced by almost half. Today, 19 million children are again excluded from the full benefit. AAUW joined over 350 organizations in urging Congress to prioritize expanding the CTC to strengthen families' economic security and assist with basic needs like housing, groceries, and care.
3. For decades, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) has published crucial studies that provide comprehensive insights about how students pay for college, progress through college to degree completion, and how they experience employment and loan repayment after graduation. AAUW has previously used this data to illustrate the disproportionate impact of debt-financed higher education on women. In December, AAUW joined the Institute for Higher Education Policy and nearly 50 other organizations in a letter to ED urging the continuation of these vitally important postsecondary sample studies, including the Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B). At a time when policymakers want more information about the return on investment for postsecondary education, we need to strengthen, not eliminate, tools that answer critical questions about graduates' experiences.

Carol Heintzelman, Public Policy Chair

BOOK GROUP

The Book Group will meet on Wednesday, March 20, to discuss *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict. Please RSVP to Linda Palmer if you plan to attend.

BRIDGE GROUP

We will meet on Wednesday, March 6, at 10:00 a.m. Please bring a sandwich for lunch. We welcome substitute players at any time. For more information, please contact Lois Kulp.

LUNCH A MONTH

Join us on Thursday, March 21, at 1:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Sandy Cooley.

Mission

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Vision

Equity for all.

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.