



Branch

Banter

JUNE 2024

FROM THE PODIUM

I do fear I may have been heard to say within your hearing that I embraced the day I would hand over the gavel to Barbara. This does not mean that I am not honored to have been asked to work with you as President and that the work required has not significantly benefited me. In this position, one hopes to listen more than speak, to edit using more than spell check, to organize both agenda and mind, and to give concentrated consideration to Branch programs and opportunities.

THUS:

If in the future you are asked to accept the challenging nomination as President, consider both the call to service as well as promise of personal advantage.

Carol Anderson, President

JOINT BOARD MEETING – JUNE 14

In-coming, out-going and returning Board members will meet on June 14 at 12:30 p.m. at Barbara Woodmansee's home. Barbara will email the agenda and lead the meeting. Branch members are welcome to attend.



SUMMER INDOOR PICNIC

Date: Wednesday, August 7 - Rain or Shine

Time: Noon

Place: Betty and Tom Hooker's Farm

Purpose: Purely social!

Details: Betty will provide sandwich fillings, bread, and paper products. Please bring something to share such as an appetizer, beverage, side dish, or dessert. Store bought is fine. Please let Betty know you are coming and what you will bring. Try to carpool, if possible.

SPRING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS LUNCHEON – A HUGE SUCCESS!

With much regret, York Branch acknowledged that our traditional Spring Market Faire is no longer feasible for a variety of reasons as a fundraiser to support our scholarship fund. With a recipe consisting of a small dose of trepidation and a great deal of enthusiasm, the Fundraising Committee proposed a Spring for Scholarships Luncheon featuring entertainment, a silent auction, and a catered meal. On April 28, our plans came to fruition with 84 people attending our gala lunch at the Country Club of York. With a total income of \$11,891.72 and expenses totaling \$3,687.31, we were able to add \$8,204.41 to our scholarship account.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the success of this fundraiser. The following members of the Fundraising Committee gave generously of their time and talent, expanding upon the basic concept until we achieved an event that ran smoothly, allowed all attendees to relax and enjoy themselves, and reaped a net income beyond our expectations:

Carol Anderson, Joan Beekey, Bonnie Bluett, Gayle Brass, Lois Conaway, Martha Fleischer, Betty Hooker, Lois Kulp, Carol Little, Anne McFeely, Sue McMillan, Janet Misiolek, Jean Quickel, Kay Roddy, Darla Stover, Phyllis Sword, and Barbara Woodmansee.

We also are grateful for the talents of Deborah Butcher, who presented an array of Broadway melodies, Dr. Meg Figdore, 1989 AAUW York Branch scholarship recipient, who spoke of the impact the award had on her life, and Kaitlyn Conrad, a graphic designer who created our PR.

Gratitude is also extended to Shannon Seitz and her staff at the County Club of York, the many local businesses who placed ads in our program and donated items for the silent auction, and York College for printing services.

On to next year! If you have suggestions for our next fundraising project, please feel free to contact me.

Nancy Buckley, Fundraising Committee Chair

MEMBER DONATIONS TO THE SPRING INTO SCHOLARSHIPS LUNCHEON

Thank you! to the following members who donated to the 'Spring Into Scholarships' Luncheon and helped to make it a great success:

Angel

Carol Anderson, Joan Beekey, Marguerite Bernstine, Bonnie Bluett, Nancy Buckley, Lois Conaway, Martha Fleischer, Donna Fulton, Betty Hooker, Carol Little, Susan McMillan, Rita Meisenhelder, Janet Misiolek, Linda Palmer, Jean Quickel, Suzanne Robertson, Linda Rupert, Darla Stover, Phyllis Sword, Barbara Woodmansee

Sponsor

Sandra Cooley, Carol Heintzelman, Lois Kulp, Sheryl Leaman, Anne McFeely, Sydney Otte, Nancy Rexrode

Friend

Barbara Bott, Paula Jensenius, Jane Long, Catharine Roddy

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Thank You - to those who've already renewed your memberships! If you have not done so yet, never fear. You can still renew by promptly mailing your check to Martha Fleischer, or by logging on to www.aauw.com to renew by credit card. If you renew by June 30, your name and contact information can be included in the next *York Branch Yearbook*.

“As many of you are aware, the proposal to eliminate the education requirement for AAUW membership was not approved by a very slim margin of 1.5%”, as noted by Cindy Hall, AAUW PA President. However, the PA Bylaws were revised and the State Board is in place for next year. Thank you to those who voted in both the AAUW PA elections and AAUW National election.

Please continue to invite potential new members to our Branch meetings.

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy, happy summer. See you in September.

Martha Fleischer, Membership Co-Vice President

AAUW MEMBERSHIP CHANGE DOES NOT PASS

AAUW Member,

The 2024 AAUW election is now complete and we are grateful for all those who took the time to vote. Congratulations to Melissa LaDuke, Dianne Owens, Sona Pancholy, and Christine Schmitz on their election to the AAUW Board!

On behalf of the AAUW Board of Directors, we are disappointed that the initiative to open AAUW's membership did not pass.

We understand that this outcome may feel exclusionary to some. But AAUW's history is one of continual change and growth, even in the face of challenges. That same resilient spirit must guide us now as we seek to fulfill AAUW's purpose to advance equity for women and girls.

There are many ways to engage with AAUW and support our mission beyond membership. Please encourage members and non-members alike to engage with us — to become [Two-Minute Activists](#), to attend our webinars and events, to apply for a [fellowship or grant](#), and to share the information and resources from our [website](#), which support women's economic empowerment.

The AAUW Board of Directors is committed to AAUW's future and to strengthening the connection with all our members and our community of branch and state organizations. We can all do more to support AAUW's efforts — and we won't stop working for an equitable future for women and girls.

Julia T. Brown, Esq.
Board Chair, 2017-2024

Cheryl Sorokin
Board Chair, 2024-2025

[AAUW Election page](#)

[Letter emailed to members on May 15, 2024.]

EDUCATION ISSUES ACTION GROUP – FROM CAROL LITTLE

One of AAUW's public policy points is support of public education. I have tried, over the past 2 years, to keep you informed of issues regarding Pennsylvania's public education system – both threats to it and victories for it.

I have agreed to be Co-Finance Officer, which will be a steep learning curve and greater responsibility for me. I will not have the time or energy to be both that and the education group chair. So, this will be my last article for the *Banter*. Betty Hooker has been very helpful in writing *Banter* articles, and I hope she will continue to do that occasionally.

If you support the public schools in Pennsylvania and would be willing to keep the membership informed of issues (<https://edvoterspa.org> provides very helpful periodic updates), please contact me or Betty, or Barbara Woodmansee.

Carol Little, EIA Group Chair

EDUCATION ISSUES ACTION GROUP

One theme of the articles that Carol Little and I have written for the *Branch Banter* this year is the excess funding paid to public cyber charter schools. On Thursday, May 16, Education Voters of Pennsylvania issued a report that echoes our concerns. They found that:

- The four largest cyber charter schools in Pennsylvania – Agora Cyber Charter School, Commonwealth Charter Academy, Reach Cyber Charter School and Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School – have increased their assets from 2018-2022 by 92,000%, an increase of 921x!
- Their net assets increased from \$566,858 in 2018 to \$486 million in 2020.
- Cyber Charter Schools spent more than \$21 million on advertising and gift cards during the 2022-2023 school year.

It is past time for the General Assembly to align the per pupil payments to cyber charter schools to the actual cost of educating their students. It is unconscionable that public schools postpone maintenance and struggle to hire adequate staff members while public cyber charter schools are "rolling in cash" provided by our school taxes. Urge your Legislators to approve the \$8,000 per pupil cap called for in Governor Shapiro's 2024-25 PA State Budget.

Betty Hooker, EIA Group

BANTER DEADLINE

August 26 is the deadline for articles for the **September 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.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

Recently, our Branch had another opportunity to engage in community collaborations. On May 9, Carol Anderson, Martha Fleischer, Betty Hooker, and I met with Carol Eicher, a member of York College's Board of Trustees, to discuss how our Branch can collaborate with York College. Carol Eicher's mother, Doris Cohen, was a long-time member of our Branch. Carol has followed in her mother's footsteps by becoming a new member of our Branch.

Carol shared information about an endowment she created at York College. The donation supported a 2023 seminar for female STEM students. Another seminar is planned for September 21, 2024. The goal is to provide opportunities for female students to network with other women and hear from female role models. Carol has invited our Branch to identify a couple of designees to attend this seminar. These attendees do not have to be AAUW members, but can be community leaders that we recommend.

Through Carol's contacts with students and York College faculty, she has made these observations: students need female role models, they need help transitioning from college to the workplace, they need to advocate for themselves, they need to find a group that shares their common interests, and they need a good mentoring program. Carol sees that AAUW can be part of that mentoring program.

Our discussions also included ways AAUW can empower and connect with students by encouraging them to participate in AAUW webinars and programs. Another way of connecting is for York College to become an AAUW affiliate.

We exchanged personal stories about Carol's mother. We will continue to explore ways to honor Doris Cohen's legacy.

The collaboration with Carol Eicher has the potential to provide ways that our Branch can be more visible in the community as well as a way of using the skills and talents of our members. Contact me if you have any ideas about community collaborations/outreach.

Barbara Woodmansee, Community Collaborations Coordinator

BOOK GROUP

We will meet on August 21 at 1:00 p.m. at Olive Garden to choose books for the upcoming year. RSVP to Linda Palmer.

BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group will meet Wednesday, June 5, at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Carol Little. Please bring a sandwich for lunch.

We are a very friendly group of players and invite you to be a sub or join our group at any time. We play during the summer months. Please call Lois Kulp for more information.

LUNCH A MONTH

This Interest Group has folded. Thank you! to Sandy Cooley for coordinating for over 10 years. If you are interested in restarting this group, please inform President Barbara Woodmansee.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Our committee is focused on enlightening our membership regarding the history and current trends of diversity, equity, and inclusion for all. This past year we have done so with a lecture, book suggestions, and informative monthly *Banter* articles.

During the month of February, our committee sponsored the program at the Branch meeting. Laura West Steck, PhD, Associate Professor of Sociology, York College, was invited to speak about *Critical Race Theory and Contemporary Conversations about Race (Part 1)*. We are hoping to invite her to return to speak more on this very timely and important topic. Also in February, the Book Group read *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett. *The New York Times* rated it as one of the Best Books of 2022. Current DEI issues are shared each month in the *Banter*. Additionally, we made suggestions of books based on relevant themes. We continue to participate with the York County Confronting Racism Coalition. We invite you to continue your understanding by suggesting the following novels by Black writers.

The House of Eve by Sadeqa Johnson
Ours: A Novel by Phillip B. Williams
Everything's Fine by Cecilia Roberts
While We Were Burning by Sara Koffi

Rita Meisenhelder & Barbara Woodmansee, DEI Co-Chairs

PUBLIC POLICY

Updates on several recent issues at the national level:

1. Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) – The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued final regulations for how to implement PWFA on April 19. The rules require that employers provide “reasonable accommodations” to employees related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, including abortion. There are several efforts to obstruct the law’s implementation, including a lawsuit filed April 25 by 17 states. A Texas federal district court ruled in February that state employees are not covered by PWFA.
2. Workplace Harassment – On April 29, the EEOC published “Enforcement Guidance on Harassment in the Workplace”. The guidance is a comprehensive resource providing best practices for preventing and remedying harassment. It includes examples illustrating unlawful harassment, including situations involving older workers and survivors of gender-based violence. The guidance also addresses recent updates in the legal landscape of harassment claims, such as the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *BOSTOCK v. CLAYTON COUNTY* (2020), in which the court held that Title VII’s protections extend to discrimination based on a person’s gender or sexual orientation.
3. Overtime Rules – On April 23, the Biden administration issued a final rule “Restoring and Extending Overtime Protections”. The rule provides additional protections for 2.4 million women workers (about the population of Kansas) who are overrepresented in low-paid jobs, working long hours for often near-poverty wages. The rule goes into effect on July 1, 2024; legal challenges are expected.
4. Noncompetes – On April 23, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued a final rule which bans contracts known as noncompete agreements, which prevent workers from leaving for a competitor for a certain amount of time. In the rule making process, FTC considered evidence that noncompete clauses negatively impact racial and gender wage gaps. The final rule will become effective 120 days after publication in the Federal Register. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has filed a challenge to the rule in federal court.

Carol Heintzeman, Public Policy Chair

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Higher Education Scholarship Committee recently met to reorganize the committee. As a result, I offered to chair the committee. On behalf of the committee, I want to recognize and thank Nancy Spataro for her leadership, experience, and hard work during the past few years when she was the chairperson. Secondly, I want to recognize and thank Bonnie Bluett who facilitated the scholarships for this year. As Co-Finance Officer, she went far “beyond the call of duty” in communications with scholarship winners and their families, as well as the local high schools and colleges that the students attend. The following year-end report is written by Bonnie:

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE – SUMMARY FOR 2023-24

During our 2023-24 fiscal year, we sponsored two Dual Enrollment students at H.A.C.C. We sponsored Olivia Farag, a junior at Central York High School, for an Introduction to Philosophy course in the fall semester. Our second Dual Enrollment student was Nomey Kahn, a junior at West York High School, who was unable to attend our May meeting, but sent the following note for us to share with our members:

Hello, my dual enrollment experience was amazing and thanks to your sponsorship I was able to take a class that I believe has greatly benefited me, especially in the long run. I personally want to go into the medical field and become a physician's assistant, and with my scholarship I was able to take a class that would Immensely further my knowledge and education when it came to the entire human body which is exactly what I needed as it pushed me a step further in my journey to where I want to be. I genuinely cannot be anymore grateful than I already am for the opportunity you all have given me, so thank you so much. Now, I understand that my say is not end all be all, however I do believe that the Scholarship Committee should continue to fund and support students like me who have big dreams. I say this because there are many students out there who go through so much worse in life who just want to do good and want to be someone who can make a difference. I truly believe that with an opportunity like what I had been given, it'll make things just one step easier. Which really is a much bigger step than anyone truly sees. My dual enrollment truly has helped me so much, and I would be so happy to know that someone may get the same opportunity as me. Again, thank you so much, and I apologize for missing the dinner! Have a good rest of your night!

We also are sponsoring two Penn State York college students to NCCWSL (AAUW's Student Leadership Conference at University of Maryland) from May 30-June 1, 2024: Caylyne Sterner, who is currently a junior and wants to prepare for her Disney internship that she will start this fall, and Alexandria Luckenbaugh, who is currently a sophomore in Human Development and wants to develop more leadership skills.

Please consider joining our committee. Awarding scholarships to students is a rewarding experience and an important cause of our Branch.

Rita Meisenhelder, HESC Chair

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.