



Branch

Banter

MARCH 2025

PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM IDENTITY THEFT

WHEN: Tuesday, March 11 1:00 PM
Social time 12:30 PM Business meeting follows program

WHERE: Glatfelter Center, SpiriTrust Lutheran, The Village at Sprengle Drive
1802 Folkemer Circle, York

PROGRAM: Our speaker Jerry Mitchell, an Outreach Specialist with the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General, will focus on Cyber Crimes and Frauds impacting us in PA. Having heard Mr. Mitchell address these issues last year, I assure that you will learn what to watch for that can steal your identity. Please invite spouses and friends to join us for this extremely important presentation which impacts all of us.

Suzanne Robertson & Darla Stover, Program Co-Vice Presidents

➤ **In Case of Inclement Weather:** a Zoom meeting will take place. An email with Zoom information will be sent by noon on the day of the meeting, or a phone call to non-email members.

A LOOK AHEAD TO OUR 'END OF YEAR DINNER'!

Please watch in your APRIL *Banter* for information about our 'End of the Year Dinner.' This will be a buffet catered by Gingerbabies Catering. The menu and your reservation form will be in the APRIL *Banter*. The price is \$33, which includes tax and gratuity. Your payment and form must be sent to Bonnie Bluett by April 30. This meeting will be held at the Alliance Church on May 13. The dinner will be 5:30 - 6:30 PM, with the meeting to follow.

Suzanne Robertson and Darla Stover, Program Co-Vice Presidents

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.

FROM THE PODIUM

March is Women's History Month. It is a time to celebrate the contributions women have made to society, culture, and to the world. It encourages people to remember how women have stood up and fought for their rights as well as providing us with the opportunity to reflect upon women's achievements. Many achievements we may not be aware of or we may have forgotten – achievements such as Ada Lovelace, an English mathematician and writer who developed instructions for the world's first computer algorithm in 1843 or Patsy Mink who was the first woman of color elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1964.

The theme for 2025 is 'Moving Forward Together! Women Educating and Inspiring Generations.' This theme recognizes the influence of women who have dedicated their lives to education, mentorship, and leadership. The theme is important because women educators and leaders have played a vital role in nurturing minds and inspiring and motivating women and girls to action. It is also an opportunity to highlight all that women accomplish each and every day.

As I consider what women accomplish every day, I reflect upon how important it is to inspire the next generation. I think about the 13-year-old girl who stood up for her rights by respectfully leading a student walkout at the Department of Defense middle school in Stuttgart, Germany (see the DEI article in this *Banter*). This story caught my attention because she was attending the same middle school I attended when my father was stationed in Stuttgart. She was brave - certainly braver than I was at 13. I believe that she was empowered and motivated by individuals who reinforced that she had the right to be heard and express her views.

We are fortunate to have strong leaders who inspire us to take action. We have a National AAUW organization and a Pennsylvania AAUW organization. Our state organization calls us to action with their message, "AAUW Pennsylvania supports moving boldly forward, recognizing the risk, and knowing the risk is even greater than doing nothing."

As we celebrate Women's History Month, we are grateful to the many women leaders who continue to remind us that we are not alone in our efforts to advance gender equity for women and girls.

Barbara Woodmansee, President

BOARD MEETING

The March 4 Board meeting will be conducted virtually using Zoom. Barbara will email the agenda prior to the meeting, which will begin at 7:00 PM. Branch members are welcome.

STRATEGIC PLANNING – THANKS FOR YOUR INPUT

Thank you to all our members who took time to discuss their thoughts and ideas about the direction our Branch should be taking. Your input will help us plan for the future of the AAUW York Branch. Your voices will help to ensure that our Branch remains a strong and vibrant organization. The results of your input will be shared in the near future.

Barbara Woodmansee, President

AAUW YORK GATEWAY TO EQUITY AWARD 2025

The York Branch has awarded the York County Confronting Racism Coalition (CRC) the Gateway to Equity Award. This nomination was submitted by Barbara Woodmansee and Rita Meisenhelder and approved by the Board. Nicole Shaffer, a representative of the CRC, spoke on our Branch meeting on Zoom in 2023.

The CRC is a Greater York organization whose mission is to create sustainable change by breaking down systemic racial barriers and by promoting healing, equity, and inclusion for all. Its vision is that York County is a place where differences are valued and equity prevails.

An example of their work is the Quick Response Committee the CRC established when a racial incident occurred in the York community. The CRC was part of a community panel to address the incident so that racism could be recognized and strategies could be developed to work towards healing the community. The work of the CRC brings light to the much-needed presence in recognizing and healing the racism that continues in our community.

The CRC is also working on creating a training model that can be used by any agency to increase equity and inclusion when it comes to the decision-making process. They are collaborating with the Human Relations Commission with this effort.

Through their actions and philosophy, the CRC has shown that they advance equity for women and girls through advocacy and education. They share AAUW's vision of equity for all.

We will present the award to the CRC at our April 8 meeting.

Lois Conaway, Awards Chair

PUBLIC POLICY

Several updates from AAUW PA:

1. **Equal Pay Day: March 5, 2025:** The General Assembly is not in session during the two weeks around Equal Pay Day in 2025 so we are asking members to reach out to the members in their local offices.
2. **Family Care Coalition Update:** Our partners at the Family Care Coalition organized a letter submission effort to express our members' priorities to the House Labor and Industry Committee.
3. **Education:** Last year, we saw the historic implementation of the remedy for the School Funding Lawsuit. Adequacy gaps were determined, and the General Assembly initiated the process to fill these gaps. Over 300 school districts received resources to meet their adequacy gap, and we are looking forward to a bigger commitment this year. PA students need a timeline for fulfilling these gaps so that every child has the education they deserve to be "successful academically, socially and civically."
4. There will be municipal, school board and judicial elections this year in Pennsylvania.

Carol Heintzelman, Public Policy Chair

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

With DEI being in the news so often, it is important for us to consider what DEI means and the effect it is having on people of all ages.

There was a recent article in the *Stars and Stripes*, an independent newspaper serving the US military community across the globe. The story was about a 13-year-old girl who led dozens of American middle schoolers in a peaceful walkout at Patch Middle School, a Department of Defense school in Stuttgart, Germany. The students were concerned about the impact that the administration's order is having on diversity-related events and initiatives, including a planned drama club performance celebrating Black History Month with Motown songs. There was also a concern about how the LGBTQ community would be affected. The young girl was thrilled with the response to the walkout from her peers, saying that 'there was a great sense of community and belonging. Like we're not alone.'

The vice principal's letter to the school's parents informed them of the protest, assuring them that the protest was peaceful and that the 'Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) respects our students' rights to peacefully express their opinions through speech and other means as long as it is done respectfully, does not interfere with the rights of others, and does not disrupt learning in the school. Our school is committed to providing a safe environment where everyone is treated with respect and encouraged to help others.'

Contrary to other stories we may have heard about the military's response to the new DEI policies, the positive response from the school shows how schools can respond to students who want to show their concern for issues affecting their everyday lives. These students took a stand, staying true to the US military's long tradition of honoring diversity. As writer and author Ola Joseph has said, 'Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another's uniqueness.'

The next DEI Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, March 6, at 1:00 PM via Zoom.

Rita Meisenhelder & Barbara Woodmansee, DEI Co-Chairs

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

At our recent meeting, we selected as a short-term project a dining out experience in which the restaurant will rebate to our Branch a percentage of the cost of our meals. A somewhat longer term project will entail the production and sale of notecards featuring the artwork of Branch members. More about these two projects will be available next month.

In April, 2026, we will reprise our highly successful Spring for Scholarships Luncheon.

As we move forward, we welcome you to join us at committee meetings to flesh out details of the above projects and/or to submit your thoughts to me by email or phone.

Next meeting: March 17, 1:00 PM, at my home.

Nancy Buckley, Fundraising Committee Chair

BOOK GROUP

The Book Group will meet on Wednesday, March 19, at 1:00 p.m. at Olive Garden to discuss *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks.

Please RSVP to Linda Palmer if you plan to attend.

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

BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group will meet Wednesday, March 5, 10:00 AM, at the home of Carol Little. Please bring a sandwich for lunch. Hostess for the April 2 game is Janet Misiolek.

If you would like to become a substitute player for the group, please call Lois Kulp Hickman for information.

GAMES & LUNCH GROUP

The Group will meet March 21, Friday, at noon. Carol Little has graciously offered to be our host! A casual potluck lunch is served. Please call Carol if you would like to join us!

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.