

BRIDGES TO EQUITY

American Association of University Women (AAUW) Valley Forge Branch Newsletter
Volume 68, no 1 September 2024



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

SEPTEMBER BRANCH MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, AT 10:15 AM

EASTTOWN LIBRARY, BERWYN

THE ELECTORAL COUNT REFORM ACT OF 2022

PRESENTED BY SHARON GURAK AND ANN MAU

Sharon Gurak, a longtime branch member and an attorney, and Ann Mau, a Phoenixville attorney, have both attended an informational meeting on this 2022 legislation. In response to the events of January 6, 2021 and the attempts to alter Congressional certification of the 2020 election, Congress enacted legislation to address many of the issues that arose on that day. Join us to discuss the improvements, gaps and prospects of the Electoral Count Reform Act (ECRA) and explore how recent law would govern scenarios of dueling slates of electors, a state that fails to certify that it is a presidential vote and a Twelfth Amendment contested election process. With another presidential election coming up in November, it is important to know how this legislation will work to protect our voting process. There will be time for discussion and questions.

Do bring guests on the 14th; it should be a very interesting meeting.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome back AAUW members! I hope you had a wonderful summer with some rest, relaxation and renewal, because this is going to be a very active Autumn!

Our national organization has partnered with When We All Vote, a leading nationwide nonpartisan initiative to change the culture around voting and increase participation across race and age. When We All Vote was started by Michelle Obama about six years ago. Amanda Hollowell, the Managing Director, noted in a webinar on July 31st that in 2020 there were 65% of the population or 80 million people in the US who did not vote. Isn't that shocking? AAUW has a long tradition of GOTV (Get Out the Vote) events. The current campaign is called It's My Vote. Stay tuned for more information about our local voting efforts. You can watch the webinar on aauw.org.

On August 15th our AAUW-PA organization had a webinar about the new Title 9 regulations. The regulations cover sex discrimination and conduct based on sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy and related conditions, sexual orientation and gender identity. New regulations went into effect August 1st. Twenty-six states are challenging the regulations. PA is not one. You can watch this webinar on aauw.org.

Our Program VP's Karen Wellin and Eleanor Erskine have put together an excellent group of programs for the next nine months. Please put them on your calendar and invite friends and family.

See you on Saturday September 14th at 10:15 a.m. at the Easttown Library!

Susan Norris



NEXT BOARD MEETING: Saturday, October 19, at Easttown Library after the branch meeting. **Remember to look at our branch website: www.aauwvalleyforge.org**. The branch email is aauwvalleyforge@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP

Debbie Snyder

I want to give you an update since we are normally finishing our dues processing at the summer's close. Currently, we have 28 dues paying members plus those who are life-members. This means that our numbers are not growing. However, we are fortunate, in terms of other AAUW PA branches, in that we still have a full board as well as monthly programs and interest groups. With all of our activities, it should be easy to gain new members who may share in our mission and meetings – we hope.

With regard to the dues dates, AAUW changed this last year, so we have an open enrollment throughout the year. This means that as our programming begins again this month, we can invite friends and families to our Saturday meetings. We have updated membership materials plus you can always share this newsletter. I am looking forward to our new year, seeing you after our summer break, and potentially gaining new members.

PUBLIC POLICY

Debbie Talbot Snyder

As this is our September newsletter, this means that we only have two months until election day. This means that we all need to vote, plus “get out the vote.” AAUW PA had several Public Policy meetings over the summer, so I would like to share with you a few of the items (especially election links, plus an August 1st Title IX update).

With regard to the upcoming elections, our State Public Policy Chair, Sandra Miller, is currently reaching out to the Executive Director of the League of Women Voters, so that we may work together this Fall. I will keep you posted about this. Here are a few links that you may want to visit:

[Its-My-Vote-2024-Voter-Issue-Guide-English.pdf \(aauw.org\)](#)

[BallotReady: Where you go before you vote](#)

[Home - When We All Vote](#)

[Election Resources – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

A few weeks ago, I attended a Zoom meeting about the changes to and the issues with Title IX. Currently there are a number of lawsuits in place (involving 26 states) that are challenging President Biden's new rules that went into effect early August. A focus of the lawsuits is sexual identity and orientation. Kansas is the dominant state in terms of the

lawsuits and these suits are also propelled by Moms for Liberty, Young Americans Foundation, and Female Athletes United. Here is a link that details Pennsylvania’s involvement with the Title IX changes (plus additional information on the Kansas lawsuits).

[2024-07-Title-IX-Rule-Challenges-ELC-Analysis.pdf \(elc-pa.org\)](https://elc-pa.org/2024-07-Title-IX-Rule-Challenges-ELC-Analysis.pdf)

INTEREST GROUPS

AFTERNOON LITERATURE

Connie Kirker & Susan Norris



We will meet on Wednesday, September 11, at 1:30 p.m. Susan Norris will host and will lead our discussion of The Women by Kristin Hannah. Please tell Susan you’ll be there.

Our October book is Grandma Gatewood’s Walk by Ben Montgomery. (note change)

CURRENT EVENTS

Susan Norris

We will meet on Wednesday, September 18, at 1:30 p.m. Charlotte Rowland will host. Bring an article that you think would interest the group. Please let Charlotte know that you will be there. We welcome newcomers!



LIVING THEATRE

Karen Wellin

Living Theater – A Fun Way to Spend an Afternoon!

Living Theater will meet on Monday, September 30, at 1:30 p.m. Elly Warren will host us at her home at Dunwoody in Newtown Square. We will read a suspenseful radio play: “Sorry, Wrong Number” by Lucille Fletcher. Karen Wellin has copies of the play. Please call Karen with any questions or comments. And please contact Elly to let her know that you’ll join us. Welcome all newcomers!





The New Yorker group will meet on Monday, September 23, at 1:30 p.m. Eleanor Erskine will host. Please let her know that you are coming and to find out which articles will be discussed.

SEPTEMBER DATES TO REMEMBER

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| 11 | Afternoon Lit. | 1:30 p.m. |
| 14 | Branch meeting | 10:15 a.m. |
| 18 | Current Events | 1:30 p.m. |
| 23 | New Yorker | 1:30 p.m. |
| 30 | Living Theatre | 1:30 p.m. |
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BRANCH PROGRAMS 2024-2025

September 14: The Electoral Vote Count Act of 2022. Sharon Gurak & Ann Mau, attorneys.

October 19: What has changed and what has not since the death of George Floyd? Anita Friday, attorney and founder of Open Hearts.

November 9: Brain Health, Kate Turner, program manager Bryn Mawr rehab, Main Line Health. A joint program with Easttown Library.

December 14: Holiday brunch. Location TBD.

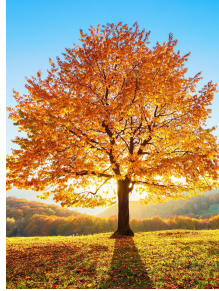
January: No meeting

February 8: Zoom meeting with community groups receiving AAUW grants.

March 8: Developments in Artificial Intelligence, John Ferries.

April 12: Progress in making Pennsylvania electoral districts more equitable, Fair Districts PA.

Sunday, May 4: Spring Luncheon and installation of officers. Program: Noah Lewis as Ned Hector, a Black Revolutionary War soldier. Waynesborough Country Club.



WE REIMBURSE YOUR RIDE!

Remember, if you need to take Uber or Lyft or a cab to an AAUW Valley Forge meeting, we will reimburse your ride. Just forward your receipt to Jean Givey. We want to see you at our meetings!