

BRIDGES TO EQUITY

American Association of University Women (AAUW)
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Valley Forge Branch Newsletter
May/June 2025



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

VALLEY FORGE AAUW BRANCH SPRING LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, MAY 4TH AT NOON

**WAYNESBOROUGH COUNTRY CLUB
440 DARBY-PAOLI RD. (ROUTE 252) PAOLI**

Do come to enjoy a delicious buffet of hot and cold dishes, socialize, hear lovely music and honor incoming and outgoing officers.

The cost is \$45.00. Please send checks to Jean Givey. Checks should be sent to arrive by April 28th so that we can give the club a final count of attendees.



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As my term as President of AAUW Valley Forge comes to a close, I can't help but reflect on my years with AAUW. I joined the North-Hills McKnight Branch in Pittsburgh in 1972. We had recently moved to Pittsburgh where I knew no one and I was a young mother with a two-year-old. During my two years there I remember studying World Hunger. I also bought a house, received my MA in Library Science, and had my son.

In Sept of 1974 we moved to Houston, Texas. Since we settled in the western suburbs, I felt Houston was too far to attend meetings, so I helped start up the West Harris County Branch, which is still going strong. An ongoing project was the organization and celebration of a monthly birthday at a local group facility for adjudicated teen girls. Once a month we would arrive with a birthday cake, small gifts and games. We really just talked to the girls. Some had never had a birthday party. Some had never talked to a white person not in the justice system. I believe we all benefitted from the connection.

In 1978 we moved to Pottstown, PA, where I immediately joined the Pottstown Branch. Over the next 8 years I held many positions including President. Our big fundraiser was a quilt (handmade by members) and an art auction. I left the branch and joined the Perkiomen Branch, which met at Ursinus College. At that time the area was all farmland (not houses as it is now) and the branch folded.

In 1988 I moved to Phoenixville, remarried, and in 2001 joined Valley Forge Branch. Maryrose Petrizzo and Lunetta Headley were co-presidents and made me feel very welcome. I have attended National meetings in San Francisco, Phoenix, St Louis and Washington, DC., and was on State Board for four years. I have attended too many PA State meetings to list. I have thoroughly enjoyed the many branch programs, the hard work running the book sales, Afternoon Lit, Current Events, and all the wonderful people I've met and friends I've made.

I'm not going anywhere. I'm still Webmaster and Bylaws Chair and will be starting a new program in September to fund teachers' projects in our local school districts. More about this in August.

Thank you all. Hope to see you at our May luncheon.

Have a wonderful summer.

Susan Norris

Remember to look at our branch website: www.aauwvalleyforge.org

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MEMBERSHIP

Debbie Talbot Snyder

Membership Renewal

Just a reminder, it is time to renew our dues. As the summer months are approaching and members may be traveling, let's try to get our dues in as soon as possible.

Similar to last year, we **are not** filling out the membership renewal forms. If you have any changes to your address, email, phone numbers, etc., please just send an email to Elly with the update and it will be included in the new directory (she keeps an excel file of the renewals and updates). Second, you can always renew online using the AAUW Community Hub. I went on to the Community Hub and renewed my dues fairly easily. Remember that if you renew on the Community Hub, you still need to pay the branch dues of \$18 by check. If you would still like to send a check, we will accept this. Please note that the national dues amount has increased by \$2.00 from last year. The links and addresses are below:

Dues Amounts:

Annual Regular Membership Dues are \$104/year, divided as follows:

- AAUW National \$74
- AAUW PA \$12
- VF branch \$18

Payment Information:

Please make check payable to: AAUW Valley Forge Branch

Send check to:

Elly Warren

Community Hub:

<https://www.aauw.org/membership/new-systems-update/>

If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Talbot Snyder.

In recent days and weeks, we have seen many unsettling issues coming up with regard to human rights and to programs that help those in need. As I have mentioned at recent meetings, LGBTQ persons are facing backlash and discrimination, DEI programs are being challenged, women's health programs and funding may be reduced, and money sent to food programs is being drastically reduced.

The last item mentioned (funds to food programs) is something I have been involved with recently. As a Junior League board member, we are facing challenges with our community programs. One of our partners in Philadelphia was just notified that their funding is being cut/ended (in the millions of dollars) and a local food pantry that we help, with regard to serving and packing, has also faced a cut in funding. So, I think that, as we live in different communities, we should pay attention to our local food banks to see what they may need. Basically, the cutting or elimination of government funds is vast and so harmful to many groups. Perhaps, next year, we can look at ways to help community partners with our public policy programs.

Lastly, during the hot, summer months, maybe this is a good time to catch up on some AAUW webinars and programs. You should have received emails with links to many webinars and if you would like to watch these, please check out the AAUW state and/or national websites for the recordings.

Debbie Snyder

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INTEREST GROUPS

AFTERNOON LITERATURE

Connie Kirker
Susan Norris

We will meet on Wednesday, May 14 at 1:30 p.m. Anne Odenweller will host and will lead the discussion of Jodi Picoult's latest book: By Any Other Name.

Elly Warren will host on Wednesday, June 11, when we will choose our books for next year. Same time: 1:30 p.m.



CURRENT EVENTS

Susan Norris

We'll meet on Wednesday, May 28 @ 1:30 p.m. Mary Carr will host. Bring an article that you think would interest the group. Please let Mary know that you will be there. We welcome newcomers! No meeting in June.



LIVING THEATRE

Karen Wellin

Living Theater will meet on Monday, May 12, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. Elly Warren will serve as hostess for the meeting. We'll go back in time with immigration law and finish reading "A View from the Bridge" by Arthur Miller. Copies are available in many libraries. Please let Elly know that you'll attend. Please call Karen with any questions or comments. Welcome all newcomers! No June meeting.



NEW YORKER GROUP

Eleanor Erskine

The New Yorker group will meet at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, May 19 at the home of Nancy Charkes. Please let Nancy know you're coming and contact Eleanor for the articles we'll discuss. The next meeting will be Monday, July 14. Place TBD.



MAY DATES TO REMEMBER

4	May luncheon @ Waynesborough CC	12 noon
12	Living Theatre	1:30 p.m.
14	Afternoon Lit.	1:30 p.m.
19	New Yorker	1:30 p.m.
28	Current Events	1:30 p.m.

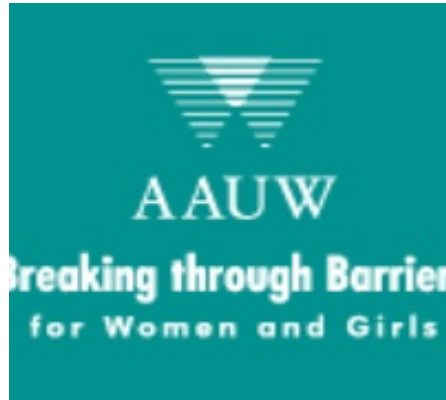
JUNE DATES TO REMEMBER

11	Afternoon Lit.	1:30 p.m.
14	Board meeting	10:30 a.m.

JULY DATES TO REMEMBER

14	New Yorker	1:30 p.m.
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NEXT BOARD MEETING: Saturday, June 14 @ 10:30 a.m. Anne Odenweller will host. We will have a potluck lunch after the meeting. Bring a salad or a dessert.



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!

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